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THE

H I S T O R Y

OF THE

REVOLUTION IN FRANCE.

К. Гаванс Сент-Элеме.

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У Я О Т А І Н



ПОКАЛУЧІ ІІ МОГІЛЮВЯ

THE
HISTORY
OF THE *Maneasted*
REVOLUTION IN FRANCE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF

J. P. RABAUT,

MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL CONVENTION,

BY

JAMES WHITE, Esq.

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С П Т 5. 5



21. 1827. ВСЕ ПОСТАВЛЕНЬ

С П Т 1. 6. 5

С П Т 2. 6. 5

22. 1827. ВСЕ ПОСТАВЛЕНЬ

С П Т 3. 6. 5

P R E F A C E.

THE following History of the Revolution of France is better entitled to the esteem of the reader, than some other productions which have been published with that title. M. *Rabaut de Saint-Etienne*, after having distinguished himself as a legislator and as an orator in the National Assembly, assumed, with not less ability and zeal, the character of the national historian; for, to vindicate the calumniated reputation of his country, was his inducement for writing the history of her revolution.

Brief, elegant, eloquent, satisfactory, he hath recorded, within the compass of this

compact and lively volume, the remote origin, the immediate causes, the progress, and the completion of that rapid and renowned regeneration.* With a pencil little inferior to that of Tacitus, he hath depicted every scene that was rendered memorable by events conducive to the establishment of liberty, and hath described, on the one hand, the obstinacy of prejudice, the blindness of superstition, the artifice of intrigue, the treachery of self-interest, the barbarity of despotism, and, on the other, the integrity and generosity of patriotism, the penetrating wisdom of enlightened legislation, and the impetuosity of popular passion, in a style which seems to partake both of the dignity of Hume, and the satirical vivacity of Voltaire.

The publication of this history will, I trust, produce effects, the very reverse of

* With the Journal annexed to this work I have have had no concern. The Appendix to the original work of M. *Rabaut de Saint-Etienne* is a copy of the French Constitution.

what

P R E F A C E.

vii

what are hoped for, by those visionaries who are raving for a revolution in this kingdom: for the following pages will prove to every reader, whose heart and understanding have not stooped to the sway of faction, not only how indispensable such a measure was to France, but likewise how unnecessary such a measure is for Britain. The contrast will be found to be so decidedly in our favour, that every honest Briton may, after having perused this book, redouble his content, and cry, *We need not a Revolution.*

At the same time, I am far from thinking that there is nothing in our system of social order, which requires the hand of reformation. Abuses do, undoubtedly, exist in this island; and the legislature is competent to invent and apply the remedy. But the success of such designs will depend upon the persons who originate and promote them. It is not for every restless citizen to assume the august function of a reformer; it is not

for the crafty hand of dark and plausible ambition, to intermeddle in a work which is peculiar to true patriotism; the troubled stream is not likely to come filtered through *such* channels; there are political personages in every state, whose very names prove inauspicious to every measure which they patronize, whose very breath would serve to taint the purest schemes of legislation.

The good sense of the men of Britain will induce them to disapprove alike the perverse timidity which insists that all is right, and the unprincipled audacity which exclaims that all is wrong.

When the British constitution was proposed as a model to the legislators of France, the majority of them answered, “that it “did not suit their circumstances.” To those who are magnifying the French constitution, as an improvement eligible for us, may we not say, with much more reason, *that it does not suit our circumstances?*

The

The wrathful pamphlets that have reviled the revolution, which it is the object of the following history to justify and defend, are as deficient in point of wisdom, as they are with respect to temper. They are *ungenerous*, *injudicious*, and *unjust*. It is *ungenerous* to insult and vilify a nation, which is struggling to relieve herself from the unchristian yoke of tyranny: it is *injudicious*, since none can tell what the Omnipotent may have in store for her; since the persecution which she endures, the firm resistance which she is making, and the recollection of her former servitude, will at length interest every heart; since the tide of general favour will turn violently in her behalf, from the noble desire to recompense her, for having rashly thought unkindly of her; since, in fine, as hath been the case of late years with America, a prosperous issue may reconcile all Christendom to her cause: it is *unjust*, since no nation, and still less an individual

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P R E F A C E.

of any nation, hath a right to censure the internal legislation of another, which, in herself, forms a sovereign and independent empire. One is astonished at the waste of talents and of time, which hath been committed in this kingdom, for the purpose of exciting in us an abhorrence for our fellow-freemen the French. Politicians should have deplored, and not execrated their errors; it is as if *Balak had said unto Balaam, Come, I pray thee, and curse me this people.*

Kings are constantly complaining, that the republican spirit is more cherished among their subjects than it ought to be. That this spirit hath much increased is incontestable. The reason is evident: for the republican form of government affords merit a more ample field for displaying her peculiar excellence, and a better-grounded hope of obtaining her due reward. She hath a right from God and nature to be laudably ambitious. Genius is ever active and enterprizing

zing, and will not tamely submit to the domination of obscurity. In a monarchy, although merit not unfrequently ascends to her proper level, yet the ascent is much more difficult, and more doubtful, than in a republic : for kings are ever encompassed by an interested and artful throng, through which unassisted merit can almost never force her way ; it is a phalanx which effectually repels her.

Perhaps it is advantageous to the public cause, that kings *cannot* do what they should do, with respect to meritorious citizens ; perhaps it is more profitable to the public cause, that men of talents should have no reason to be attached to kings and ministers.

I am happy in having possessed a sufficiency of health and leisure, to enable me to act the part of translator to M. *Mirabeau*, and to his patriotic colleague, M. *Rabaut de Saint-Etienne*. The legislators of France, as long as their labours contain nothing injurious

jurious to the true principles of Christianity, and are directed to no other object than the happiness of humankind, shall have the best wishes of one who, while he laments their mistakes, must admire their magnanimity.

JAMES WHITE.

London, April 26, 1792.



THE

HISTO

OF THE

REVOLUTION OF FRANCE.

BOOK THE FIRST.

IT is my purpose to comprise, within a narrow compass, the History of the French Revolution; in order that, being placed within the reach of every reader, and readily dispersed through every land, it may destroy those impressions, so unfavourable to France, which have been attempted to be made, on all sides, by the enemies of liberty.

Posterity alone will be enabled to judge of the hidden causes, to which are to be ascribed the

particular events that have accelerated and accomplished the course of the Revolution ; but the general causes are to be dated farther back. It had been prepared by the progress of human affairs ; and the unavoidable convocation of the States-General did, in some measure, only proclaim the Revolution. If any thing ought to excite the astonishment of foreigners, it is the felicity with which that Revolution hath been conducted, amidst the shocks occasioned by so many inflamed passions, and so many hostile interests. Repeatedly did the tempest seem on the point of submerging the political bark, and as repeatedly did she escape shipwreck, by the solidity of her frame, and by the skilfulness of her pilots. The history of these three memorable years presents us with a dramatic scene, which hath had its beginning, its middle, and its end. Private interests formed its several plots and intrigues, which have been disconcerted, either by the greatness of the constituting body, or by the power and impetuosity of the nation herself, till that day on which the King, by accepting the Constitution, effected the *dénouement* of this busy and important drama.

Some clouds are still passing athwart the firmament of France. With vexation do particular interests see the necessity of submitting to the interests of the whole ; and the struggle concerning

cerning privileges still uselessly subsists. The Nobles, whose imaginary superiority existed in opinion only, are flattering themselves that they continue to exist, although that opinion be annihilated. They have endeavoured to revive the lofty spirit of the feudal system, at a time when the feudal system was no more, and to bring the chivalrous ideas of the ignorant twelfth century into the midst of that knowledge which enlightens the eighteenth. Those orders, therefore, perceived not, as they grew old, that their maxims were growing old along with them, and that, when every thing around them hath undergone a change, they must themselves suffer change, or perish. How could such a structure stand, when the prop of public opinion no longer supported it ?

The Clergy is still seeking, in a religion which is called the religion of peace, for pretences and the means of discord and of war ; it is embroiling families in the hope of dividing the State : so difficult it is for that order of men to be taught to renounce riches and authority !

But Knowledge, that will, ere long, reveal herself to the lower class of the Citizens, will free them from that slavery which is the most dangerous of all, the slavery of the understanding : then, either the priests will become citizens,

zens, or the citizens will determine to do without them.*

Every one of those abused powers, the number of which had been increased by the barbarism of the first ages, and by the despotism of the latter, have now vanished. They had been supported by the despotism of the throne itself, which had created them, as instruments useful to its authority. Accordingly they have affected, for these two years past, an hypocritical attachment to the royal authority, of which they styled themselves the defenders ; and the friends of privileges were called the friends of the King. But hypocrisy is never successful, except when she is addressing credulity. From the moment Louis XVI. consented voluntarily to the restriction of the royal authority, they were deprived of every pretext ; and, ever since, we have seen them contending in open war for the restoration of their privileges : nevertheless, they will be obliged to subsist upon the recollection of them ; for, notwithstanding the particular troubles which they may yet be able to excite, the foundations of France are laid, the Constitution is erected, and the moment is arrived, when we can write the history of the Revolution.

* That is, France, like Scotland, will learn to do without Episcopacy. W.

The FRENCH NATION hath, for several centuries, been subject to arbitrary laws, which lay heavy at once on the lives and on the fortunes of the citizens. The people, which is every thing in free states, and which is nothing in despotic empires, was enslaved by such a multitude of particular tyrannies, that its purest substance was dissipated in imposts, levied by violence, or by address, or by superstition, or by privileges. The King of France alone levied taxes to a greater amount than many mighty Princes of Europe united. The Clergy reaped, free of all expence, the fifth of the net produce of the territorial revenues of the kingdom ; it possessed, moreover, immense estates, and contributed nothing but gratuitous gifts, which it imposed upon itself at pleasure. The humiliating rights of the feudal system gave the Nobles a kind of revenue, which was a real impost upon agriculture, and a source of innumerable vexations ; and, although possessed of prodigious property, they considered themselves exempt from advancing any thing to the public charges, the weight of which fell altogether upon the people. A host of privileged and ennobled persons had obtained or purchased from despotic power, the right of not contributing to the expences of the state. The venality of offices had rendered justice venal of course ; and every law-suit was

likewise an impost; a disastrous contribution, because it not only tithed the fortunes of the litigants, but frequently devoured them.

Meanwhile, the apparent facility with which the people paid such considerable impositions, encouraged Government to invent new ones. The expences of the Court were arbitrary, and the substance of the Plebeian order was, by long established custom, squandered away upon the most pompous frivolity. The throne was besieged by a multitude of craving men, and of self-interested women, upon whom, under various pretences, the treasures of the state were lavished. Destructive wars, undertaken with levity, and often for the sole advantage of a few individuals, had been, for two entire reigns, accumulating the public calamities. Distressing loans had successively created an enormous debt; and the nation, affrighted at the condition of the finances, had nothing before her eyes, but the discouraging prospect of bankruptcy.

Tyranny against our fortunes is never unaccompanied by tyranny against our persons; and, in order to get possession of the property of the Plebeian classes, it was previously necessary to enslave them. Since the monarchs of Europe, after the example of those of Asia, have had armies at their command, they have become masters of the lives and fortunes of their sub-

jects. This institution, devised by kings, with the view of weakening the overgrown authority of their feudatories, and of dispensing with their military services, which the latter rated much too dear, marked the æra of despotism in Europe. Wars, which kings have always seemed to consider as matters of necessity, and which, nevertheless, have always been attributed to the folly of the people, furnished a pretext for raising armies, and the raising armies furnished the pretext and the means for new wars. No despot made a progress unattended by these satellites; and, wherever you see an army which is paid by its master, you may say, there goes a tyrant, or a man who is about to be one, and that is the same thing to liberty. Our kings, who formerly made no laws without the people's consent, now no longer condescended to consult it; their will was the supreme law. Then did monarchy change her nature; she became amongst us what the Greeks called tyranny, that is, the arbitrary government of a single ruler. As, from the wide extent of the monarchy, it was impossible for the Prince to oversee every thing himself, the Kings of France were under the necessity of consulting Ministers; and these at length undertook to govern every thing. A despot may sometimes think of rendering his people happy, and his empire flourishing, be-

cause they are the patrimony of his family ; a Minister will infallibly turn his principal attention to the establishment of his own power and interest. The Viceroyship in France is an epoch in the history of despotism, and the people hath been there more or less enslaved, according as the Ministers have been more or less absolute. From these last have originated those extraordinary commissions, invented for the satisfaction of their personal revenge, and *Lettres de Cachet*, and arbitrary imprisonments, and those fertile creations of the treasury, those sales of employments and offices, which, in filling King's coffers, served likewise to replenish their own, or to pay the wages of their dependents.

Every nation that is in subjection to the will of one man, hath suffered more or less from his despotism ; but no nation hath been more disdainfully oppressed than that of France. From the domination of Cardinal de Richelieu, to the commencement of the States-General in 1789, the King's subjects, for that was the appellation, have been continually bowed down by the heavy hand of an oppressive Government, by so much the more humiliating, as that people was endued by nature with that undefinable gift, called *Esprit*, and was, laterally, illuminated with philosophy. The King's advisers laughed at the people's judgements, and at its satires ; and when

when at length, in consequence of the increasing light of knowledge, a public opinion, stamped with an imposing dignity, was formed, which, after all, was only the expression of the general will, the Ministers persisted in their imperious mode of acting, and in their insolent disdain. This inattention to propriety proved their ruin. It cannot be too often repeated, that usurped power owes her abasement to no other circumstance, than her not having been aware that she was perishable.

May we not, with good reason, reproach arbitrary power with that multitude of vexations wherewith the people have been weighed down, and with those wars almost ever unjust, and with those accumulated imposts; atrocious iniquities; which our posterity will one day bless, because to them they will be indebted for their liberty? To the barbarous domination of the imperious woman of Medicis, that wicked foreigner, who dyed France with the blood of its inhabitants, succeeded the reign of Richelieu, that is, of despotism in person. Ever since have we been governed by his maxims. After having been oppressed by the iron rod of Richelieu, France groaned a second time under the cunning hand of Mazarine; who corrupted those whom that other priest had only terrified and abased. Those high and independent spirits were no more,

more, who, in the midst of civil wars, had displayed a kind of greatness, which the gallant Henry had not time to turn against a foreign enemy. All grovelled at the feet of a master ; for Richelieu had taught them flattery.

Over such men, thus uniting lostness with meanness, and corruption with pride, was it the destiny of Louis XIV. to sway the sceptre. Of him nothing hath been left unsaid, and posterity hath, perhaps, revenged itself to excess, for the lying adulation of his subjects. But if that monarch protected the arts, which contributed to his glory ; if he beheld the harvest of that despotism, the seeds of which were sown by Richelieu ; if he astonished the world with that air of grandeur, which formed the character of his reign, by what a multitude of miseries were not those factitious goods compensated ! His taste for conquest made him prodigal of the blood and treasure of his subjects ; his arrogant magnificence had drawn upon him the enmity of all Europe ; his tyranny over conscience, first drenched with blood, and then depopulated his empire. Louis XI. had but one dungeon, and he lay upon the vault under which his victims were lamenting their captivity. Louis XIV. had a thousand, and, deaf to the cries of his unhappy subjects, delivered himself up to all the luxury of a court, renowned for voluptuousness

ness and gallantry. He it was, who paved the way for the down-fall of the nobles, by enticing them from their castles, in order to amuse and degrade them * with ribands, and stars, and stools of honour; and when once this title to glory became venal, and that illustriousness was to be had for money, † opinion asserted her prerogative, ‡ and the nobility of France hath been considered all over Europe, in the same light in which it hath been considered amongst us.

The fruits of the reign of Louis XIV. have been, on one hand, the conquest of some provinces, the perfection of the fine arts, a stage superior to that of Athens, a taste and an urbanity, which have served as models to every other court, and above all, the union of the several parts, before unconnected, of the government, and of the empire. On the other hand, the loss of five or six hundred thousand men, who perished in different wars; that of five or six hundred thousand more, who fled the kingdom, and carried with them, all over Europe, the arts which he had favoured, and a hatred to his name; an immense debt, horrible calamities

* That is true, faith.—Bravo.

† Et qu'on est devenu illustre avec de l'argent.

‡ A été formée.

towards

towards the latter end of his reign, and a degree of misery, the like of which no modern people ever experienced. The despotism which he had consolidated, was the inheritance which he left us. From the Minister, down to the lowest agent of authority, it was nothing but a concatenation of iniquities.* They all agreed to grovel in the presence of their masters, in order to acquire the right of despising their inferiors ; and this servility of spirit had been faithfully transmitted to us, from generation to generation, both of monarchs and of ministers.† His armies, which, for some time, had been formidable to foreign States, were now no longer formidable to any but his subjects. Ten thousand slaves, laced and titled, were his guards ; and this apparatus of royalty, so well adapted to dazzle the vulgar, only proclaimed the enormous distance at which he set himself from his people. Those virtues of a despot, haughtiness and vanity, which made Louis XIV. a superb idol, are no longer considered but as vices and as injuries, under the reign of equality and liberty.

The short interval of the regency was only characterized by a delirium, into which no

* Une chaîne d'oppression.

† De regne en regne.

nation but the French could fall : the principles of the Government underwent no alteration. Louis XV. found the machine of despotism wound up, and all that he had to do, was to let it run its revolutions. Under his sway the court was every thing, and the kingdom nothing. The sale of offices and of nobility was increased to a degree that was ridiculous. Religious disputes, the most absurd of all, because nobody understands them, dishonoured, for thirty years, this weak and insignificant reign. The honour of the French arms, was, for some time, well supported ; but, afterwards, wars were undertaken without reason, continued without conduct, and terminated without glory. The French became the jest of every nation upon earth. While taxes, and loans, which are likewise taxes, were draining the sources of agriculture, commerce was oppressed by innumerable restraints ; the Court threw contempt upon her. Dejected industry went to look for, in other climes, the encouragements and the recompences due to her exertions. The Government thought of nothing but maintaining its influence, the Ministers of nothing but intrigue, the Court of nothing but pillage, for the purpose of prodigality, the Grandees of nothing but gratifications and employments. The glory and the strength of the nation were a cypher, in the ready,

ready, but wretched, calculations of private interest.

In this manner was one of the greatest kingdoms in Europe verging fast to its declension. The national character was effaced ; and the only reason why the French had such an aptitude to assume the forms of other nations, was because they had no fixt character of their own. The languor of the Government infected * all orders of society, as the court infected them with its fashions. Moral slavery, that species of insignificance peculiar to minds stript of independence and of liberty, chained every thought to one thought, and every will to one will. Opinion likewise had her despotism, and her throne was set up at court ; for public opinion was not yet in being, her severe tribunal was not yet erected. *Bon ton* was the title given to that law, so often capricious, and perpetually despotic, which a few women, and womanish men, caused to be executed imperiously by the boyish arm of foppery. † Imitation was become the characteristic of the French ; that is to say, they had no character. It is, perhaps, to this effeminacy of the soul, which excludes all

* Se communiquoit.

† Thus a *Marechal* of France hath given a name to a new invented hair-powder, and taught his countrymen the art of subduing one stink by another.

grand and forcible ideas, that we are to attribute the declension of the fine arts, in a nation where they had had so distinguished a commencement. The French were allowed to possess the talent of perfecting and embellishing the inventions of other nations : but they were refused the honour of that creative genius, which scorns to submit to the tyranny of habitude.

To trace the insensible progress of the mind towards political insignificance, is to write the history of the Revolution. Several regions of Europe are a proof that men may multiply and vegetate corporeally as a nation, * without that nation having any existence. France, formed by her extent, by her population, and by the genius of her inhabitants, to hold an elevated rank in Europe, no longer possessed any pre-ponderance. Not one of those exalted souls, who, at the present day, have been the founders of the Revolution, and who have witnessed the close of the reign of Louis XV. hath forgotten what was, at that time, the nothingness of the King, of the Government, and of the nation.

Nevertheless, it was in that very reign, that the weapons were forged, which have broken the chains of tyranny. In the progress of the human mind, the age of philosophy must necessarily

* En corps de nation.

succeed the age of the fine arts. We begin by copying nature: we conclude with studying her: we first observe the objects, and afterwards inquire into their causes and their principles. Under the reign of Louis XV. the men of letters assumed a new character;* and when poetry, architecture, painting, and sculpture, had produced a multitude of master-pieces; when novelty, which forms the chief merit of the fine arts, was exhausted, and noble conceptions were become more difficult, the mind naturally turned itself towards examining into the principles themselves. The age of reason, which inquires, succeeded that of imagination, which paints. This first influence of reason had quenched the flames of religious quarrels, which, for the space of two centuries, had retarded the improvement of France. We were now no longer so much occupied with those abstract ideas, which answer no other end than to enrich or to give importance to the class of men which lives by them. The sciences, the arts, the enjoyments they procure, had changed the direction of the mind; and whatever ridiculous consequences Louis XIV. and his hypocritical court, might have bestowed upon disputes which were devoutly frivolous, they were unable to give them currency, as the character of the age.

* Good in many respects, materially bad in one.

It is worth while to observe, that, at this juncture, there was established a communication between France, and the northern parts of Europe, where there reigned a greater degree of liberty, and more independence in the article of opinion. It was the southern part which, hitherto, had governed us by her false maxims, or which had influenced us by her policy. Rome had given us her religion ; Italy her Machiavelism, her luxury, and her arts ; and Spain had furnished us with civil wars. All our opinions, all our disputes, derived their birth from beyond the mountains. From the crusades and the wars of Italy, down to the famous bull,* Rome had constantly been our director ; the rest of Europe existed not for us. But when true and sound philosophy had enlightened the north, and France had begun to think and to reflect, an intercourse was formed between minds of the first magnitude.† England, Holland, Switzerland, and Germany, abounded in universities, where, notwithstanding some remains of pedantry, the chair of philosophy was filled by reason. These regions of good sense looked with pity upon countries more favoured by the hand of nature, but where the progress of prejudice rendered her presents of no

* The bull *Unigenitus*, I suppose he means.

† *Les Esprits superieurs.*

use. The excommunicated part of Europe was the most enlightened.

The correspondence of Locke, Clarke, and Newton, with Leibnitz, and some learned men of France and Italy, was then considered as a wonderful improvement of the human mind. It was matter of astonishment, that philosophers, who differed in their religious creeds, should correspond with such a spirit of toleration. This commerce soon became more extensive. We entertained so high an idea of ourselves and of our language, that we looked upon foreign idioms as the jargon of barbarians: accordingly, we neglected to learn them. At length Locke was translated; Locke, the father of thinking, and the first who proved, by his works, that philosophy was nothing but reason. But for Locke, perhaps, we should never have had a Condillac. Inquiry was soon made for other excellent productions, the fruit of English reflection and of English independence; and Voltaire hath had reason to boast of having first brought us acquainted with the labours of the British philosophers.

The French were already worthy of it, for Montesquieu had appeared. The ingenious and resolute * criticisms (resolute for those days) con-

* Audacieuse.

tained

tained in his Persian Letters, had engendered a degree of boldness in the minds of men ; his Spirit of Laws taught them to become profound thinkers. His reflections upon government contain every principle of liberty, which hath been brought to full perfection by reason, time, and the fortunate mistakes of despotism. But there was one man, who, more than all the rest, promoted the progress of reason in this kingdom ; that man, who, while yet in youth, bewitched every reader with the charms of his brilliant poetry ; who united, in his own person, every talent given to man ; who brought every branch of human knowledge to perfection ; who combated every abuse ; who undertook the defence of all who suffered oppression ; and who, during sixty years, directed or commanded the opinion of the public.* I ask every man, of the present generation, all those who, at least, have learned to think for themselves, and to rise superior to prejudices, Whether they are not indebted for these advantages to Voltaire ? His indefatigable perseverance awakened sloth herself, and never did he allow the age to slumber over verity. His judicious instructions, his penetrating remarks, and cutting satires, were continually the scourge of prejudices, until, after having successively

* A man envious and envied, at once feeling and causing jealousy, alike the friend and the enemy of mankind.

overthrown the innumerable champions of folly, he reigned without a rival in the arena.

The unwearied protector of the miserable, loved liberty, because he was passionately in love with humanity. All the principles of freedom, all the seeds of the Revolution, are to be found in the writings of Voltaire. He had foretold it, and occasioned it. He incessantly undermined the ground on which despotism was ever building. Happy in being permitted, by nature and by time, to enlighten two generations ! for freedom of thought † keeping pace, day by day, with the errors committed by arbitrary power, the French arrived much sooner at the moment, when the minds of men were to undergo a total change.

Then it was that a school was formed of superior geniuses, whose writings spread abroad an abundance of useful truths ; and these truths forming, in their turn, a multitude of disciples, an enlightened tribunal was established, which took cognizance of ministers and kings : this tribunal was public opinion. Such a court of inquiry was a thing unknown to the ancients, because printing was unknown to them, and because men were fashioned by custom and by the laws. Those nations who have but one book,

† Happy, if this freedom of thought, with respect to religion, had not degenerated into licentiousness.

as the Jews, the Mahometans, the Guebres, never alter their opinions; accordingly, they must proceed to the end of time, without making the slightest progress in improvement: their doctors are always right, for they are never contradicted. And this is one of the causes of the perpetuity of despotism in Asia.

The tyrants of thought would fain have deprived us of books also. We all remember what persecution the first writers endured, who had the courage to tell us the truth; the dungeons of the Bastille swallowed them up alive, and the Parliaments did them the honour to attaint them.* But when their numbers increased, and when, strong by their union, they no longer dreaded sentences which the public condemned, truth penetrated every where; books crossed every frontier in the kingdom; they entered every house; and at length the tired inquisition ceased to persecute them. The most violent and able adversaries of the freedom of the press, the Jesuits, had disappeared, and, after them, none durst employ the same despotism and perseverance.

When the minds of the French were once turned towards instructive reading, they extended their attention to the mysteries of government. The Encyclopædia possessed this peculiar advan-

* Les honoroient de la flétrissure.

tage, that, treating of every science, it furnished all the learned, who made it the repository of their thoughts, with an opportunity of discussing politics, civil œconomy, and finance. A school, or, to speak more properly, a sect, which still consulted its master * as an oracle, for some time had possession of the public mind. The œconomists were accused of a kind of mystic language, ill adapted to the clear and simple oracles of truth. It was thought that they did not understand themselves, since they could not make others understand them. But we owe to their virtuous obstinacy, the having brought the French to reflect upon the science of government. It is to their constancy, in occupying us so long with the same objects, that we are indebted for the publication of ideas, which are so simple, that they are become common ; as, that in the freedom alone of industry consists her prosperity ; that talents should be subjected to no restraints ; that the liberty of exporting corn is the source of its abundance ; that the imposts should not be laid upon the labours of the husbandman, but on the surplus remaining, after he hath paid himself for his expences. Undoubtedly all this had been said long before ; but the writers of the Encyclopædia have said it over and over again, † and

* Voltaire.

† Ont redites et répétées.

thus

thus it is, and no otherwise, that opinions are established.* But the government, which affected ignorance of those truths, conducted itself by contrary maxims; and it became a virtuous thing to enlighten and to animate one's fellow-citizens.

In this manner were our ears accustomed to the sweet and flattering sound of the word liberty, and despotism had as yet no pretence for being enraged at it. A philosopher, worthy of the days of the Greeks and Romans, in whose school he had been instructed, taught liberty to speak a language more masculine. Jean Jaques Rousseau presented to the veneration of exalted souls, to the love of souls endued with sensibility, that liberty whose image was engraved upon his heart. He pourtrayed her charms, and her enchanting enthusiasm, and her sacred austerities, and her everlasting sacrifices. Never did he separate her image from that of virtue, without whom the existence of liberty is but transitory. At length he drew up her code in his *Social Contract*; and this immortal production fixed our ideas with respect to liberty. In that book was found the assem-

* Is not this an excellent answer to those fastidious minds, who are continually complaining of *triteness*? It is worthy of remark, that those are the most apt to lament the triteness of ideas, who never conceived a new idea in their lives. I insist that this last is not a *trite* observation. Is it not time to invent for such, a new form of prayer, instead of the *pater noster*, which hath now been hackneyed for near 1800 years?

blage of those principles, round which all gallant spirits came to rally: from that book were, one day, to be extracted those principles, which, in rendering nations free, intended to establish liberty upon a lasting foundation, and to consecrate their rights to eternity. After Rousseau, Raynal thundered against all kinds of tyranny; he arraigned despotism at the judgement seat of his fellow-citizens; breaking through every fetter, shaking off every yoke, and boldly unmasking every species of hypocrisy, he communicated to the age he lived in, his indignation against tyranny.* We have not yet forgotten what was the effect of his productions, at a time when despotism, doubly disgraced by vice, seemed desirous of meriting abhorrence in every shape. Such was the disposition of the public mind, when the crown of France descended to Louis XVI.

His heart was good; he felt an attachment to his people, and a repugnance to be a tyrant, proofs of which he hath shewn, as often as he hath spoken and acted for himself. From his youth he had declared his taste for the refor-

* Strange it is, however, and truly to be lamented, that such very able men, who saw into other abuses with so penetrating an eye, could not discriminate between the useless lumber of religion, and the pure and inestimable spirit of Christianity. By a kind of infatuation, they all laboured to undermine what is the very cement of civil society.

tion of abuses, and the courtiers trembled at the idea of it. But the custom of the court of France was, to keep the heirs to the throne at a distance from all knowledge of affairs of state,* in order to impose on them the more easily, and to govern in their name. Such has been the chief cause of the troubles which have afflicted Louis XVI. With proper instruction, he might have saved the state ; for he was naturally an œconomist, and it was to the depredations on the royal treasury that the public indignation was principally directed.

He wished for counsellors ; he sought for them amongst the friends of his father. He called Maurepas to the Ministry, and imagined that he had summoned a sage, because he had summoned an old man ;† but all he got was a veteran courtier, who had nothing else in view than to keep his power as long, and as quietly, as possible.

It must be observed, that through the whole course of his reign, Louis XVI. yielded constantly to what he believed to be the wish of the nation ; and, as every man, in his conduct through life, is directed by some habitual idea, it may be said, that the King was always guided

* Are there no other courts where this usage is established ?

† Excellent.

by the idea above-mentioned. He shewed it at the moment of his accession to the throne, by recalling the banished parliaments, and reversing the vengeance of Maupeou. The parliaments were considered as a part of the nation, and, if not as her support, at least her hope. Their feeble and useless, and often fallacious remonstrances, presented at least a barrier against that despotism, which had exhausted the patience of every human being. Their banishment had, for three years, been the object of general attention, and given birth to a multitude of publications upon government. It was impossible, with such principles as had enlightened the present generation, that the rights of the people, and the duties of Kings, should not have been examined into, searched to the very bottom, published ; and that a multitude of men heaped together in a great city, where ideas can be so quickly communicated, should not call on the name of liberty, that imperial and universal destroyer of abuses.*

The abuses, in fact, still subsisted. The King had called M. Turgot to the Administration of the Finances : this was confiding them to virtue. Trained to business in the intendance of the Limousin, he had there acquired one of those

* Souveraine destructrice de tous les abus.

solid reputations which infallibly attract esteem. His genius, fertile in principles, led him to aggrandize commerce by the aid of liberty ; industry, by giving to every one the right to exercise it ; agriculture, by simplifying the taxes ; he contributed to public comfort, by the relief which he afforded the poorer class of citizens, and to the perfection of the general system of administration, by the popularity of the particular branches in it. Possessing a capacity which saw every thing, and already persuaded of that important truth, of which the constituting Assembly hath convinced us, that it was necessary to reconstruct the entire machine, he was desirous of doing every thing. He was reproached on this head : *In my family, says he, none passes the age of fifty : I have but a few years to live ; I ought to leave nothing behind me undone.* This was raising up against himself that crowd of persons in credit, whose existence depends upon the miseries of the public : foes appeared in every quarter ; he was obliged to retire.

He was succeeded by M. de Clugny, who was succeeded by M. Necker. His knowledge of political œconomy, and of finance, proclaimed him to the city of Paris ; for the nation as yet knew him not. Passionately in love with glory, and the public good, in which he placed that glory, he meditated plans of reformation and

and œconomy, which the devouring dissipation of the Court rendered impracticable. It hath ever been the honourable error of his heart, to put his trust in virtue. But at length, whether it was that the love of glory, with which his breast was animated, had convinced him that nothing solid was to be obtained without the public esteem, or that he wished to be supported by the nation against the active intrigues of courtiers, amidst whom he was a stranger, he published his statement of the condition of the finances. His *Compte rendu* produced the effect of a sudden light in the midst of darkness. The enthusiasm was universal. The book passed through every hand ; it was read in the villages and hamlets. The reader ran through it with eager curiosity ; he devoured those short pages in which the expences and resources of France were at length recorded. We wetted with our tears those pages which a citizen-minister had imprinted with luminous and conformable reflections, and where he was turning all his attention to the prosperity of the French, with a sensibility deserving of their gratitude. The people blessed him as its saviour ; but all those who are nourished by the abuses in state affairs, formed a confederacy against the man who seemed intent upon ravishing their prey from them. We are indebted to him for some happy essays upon the provincial

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administrations, which proved the truth of d'Argenson's remark, that domestic affairs are never well conducted, but when they are in the hands of a citizen.* But M. Necker had composed, upon this subject, a memorial intended for the King alone, and which was published by the enemies of that Minister: he there exposed the abuses in the finances, the oppressive government of the intendants, the *esprit de corps* of the parliaments. A host of enemies rose up against him. M. de Maurepas, who had called in M. Necker, no longer afforded him any support. The latter, at length, tired out by innumerable disgusts, gave in his resignation. The blood-luckers of the state recovered from their dismay, and the Court, relieved from all its terrors, beheld, with a malignant joy, the departure of a Statesman, for the loss of whom the people shed tears. Still useful in his retreat, he enlightened the public mind, though he could not govern the kingdom, and published his celebrated work on the Administration of the Finances. This book, perhaps, did more good than a long and wise administration; for it spread knowledge far and wide, and sowed the seeds of the present patriotism.

* Is not Sully, however, an exception?

It was still a question, whether one man could cure the maladies of the state ? Foreigners, to whom our Revolution had been represented as the blunder of a capricious people, are ignorant of the deep wounds with which the entire body politic are covered. There is no person in Europe who does not know, that, of all the kingdoms which compose it, that of France was the worst governed. But this idea, so vague, when it strikes one only at a distance, could not fail of sensibly affecting a nation which had suffered so long. The notion that our maladies were incapable of remedy, and that no human hand could cure them, added keenly to the general grief : we saw ourselves plunged in a gulph of debts and public engagements, the interest alone of which absorbed the third part of the revenue, and which, far from being put into a course of liquidation, were continually accumulating by loans and anticipations. These anticipations, practised nowhere but in France, are the science of ruining a state, by eating up its revenues beforehand, like a thoughtless young man, who hath no concern about the future. France had, doubtless, great resources ; but it was an additional circumstance of grief, to think that they were useless : for it would have been necessary to begin by certain projects of œconomy, in order to come to the moment when we might live on our

our own revenue. But the Court would not hear of œconomy ; there, pomp was become a necessary of life ; there, an opinion always prevailed, that the magnificence of the Court is the essential characteristic of a great people. Every branch of the Administration went upon the same lofty notion ; that is, every agent of authority considered himself obliged to incur prodigious expences : they might well have been styled the Satraps of the Great King. The pomp of the Court of Louis XIV. was parsimony when compared to the prodigality of Louis XV. and his successor. Carelessness with regard to the future prevented them from inquiring whence so much money came, and what it cost the people to pay it, and how such vast expences could be continued, or how deplorable would be the general wretchedness, when it should become a matter of impossibility to provide for even what was necessary. The state was reduced to expedients ; for loans, and anticipations, and arbitrary imposts, are nothing else but expedients.

Meanwhile, the affairs of the royal revenue were become so much entangled, that no person could unravel them. Under thirty successive ministers, the Court, ever craving and ever poor, had invented new resources. To imagine a new tax was considered as a stroke of genius, and the art of disguising it shewed the adroitness

adroitness of the financier. We had already imported from Italy, under the auspices of our regents of the house of Medicis, the celebrated resource of farming out the taxes, the science of which consists in giving as little as you can to the state, in order to levy as much as you can upon the people. The sale of offices and commissions was likewise a tax levied upon pride and upon folly : their number increased every day. It is necessary to acquaint foreigners into whose hands this brief and rapid history may fall, that, among us, was sold the exclusive right of exercising such or such professions, and that this right became a title. Patents were made out for carrying on the trade of a peruke-maker, of a coal-meter, of a searcher of hog's tongues ; and these callings became exclusive ; they were termed privileges. The rich purchased them as a speculation, and sold them to advantage. A certain financier had, in his port-folio, thirty patents for peruke-makers, which were bought of him at a high price, by persons dwelling in the remotest provinces. Besides that, this low kind of speculation changed the character of a people, where every thing, even to honour, was become venal, these new-created offices were all so many indirect taxes ; for the purchaser never failed to make the public reimburse him. It was injurious to industry, since, in order to exercise

exercise a profession, it was not necessary to have talents for it, but to be either rich already, or to borrow in order to become rich. In fine, it was an additional burthen to the state, which paid the salary or the interest of every office that was sold. The number of them was enormous. A person who was employed to count them, and who grew weary of the task, ventured to estimate them at above three hundred thousand. Another calculated, that in the space of two centuries, the people had been burthened with more than a hundred millions of new taxes, solely for the purpose of paying the interest of those offices. This was evident, when the Constituting Assembly, always cutting deep, and destroying each abuse at the very root, decreed the reimbursement of offices. Every day new patents were seen starting from obscurity; and it was foreseen, that it would prove impossible to liquidate them, except in the course of time.

Whatever could be considered as of any consequence in the kingdom, existed by this venality, since every thing had been sold. Each day new imposts, which were masked under the name of *rights*, although nothing could have been less right, and more iniquitous, fell suddenly upon some object of necessity, and disarranged the fortunes of those who owed their livelihood to their labour. This branch of the revenue had

also its peculiar mysteries, which were known to none but the initiated; and the people still continued to pay. But, by the long duration, and the accumulation of these abuses, there was formed in the heart of the nation, a second nation, particular and privileged; it was a confederacy of all those whose life and existence depended upon the abuses. This new nation lived at the expence of the old one. But its inevitable coalition obstructed every project of reformation; the Minister who should have attempted it would have been soon displaced. M. Turgot, who wished to do it all at once, was decried, and obliged to retire. M. Necker desired to take his time, and work insensibly; but a peaceful administration of fifty years, without wars, and without wants, would have proved insufficient for the undertaking. So prodigious an attempt was above the means and abilities of any single person; nothing but the entire nation could be equal to a deed so bold; and we have all seen what dangers were incurred by the Constituting Assembly, and by the public interests, in so awful and alarming a shock. In fact, what an astonishing combination would a Minister, nay, a Monarch, have had to combat! Sixty thousand nobles, possessed of all the connections of the feudal system, and that host of dependents which was fed by them; those of the military profes-

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tion, all noble; or, what is still worse, pretending to nobility; a hundred thousand privileged persons, all leagued to support their prerogative of not paying such or such an impost: two hundred thousand priests, very unequal indeed as to income, but all united in one common system, forming but one whole, directing at their pleasure the women and the rabble, and accustomed, for a thousand years, to govern the empire by opinion and by prejudices: sixty thousand persons leading a monastic life, and many of whom still powerfully influenced that world which they had made a solemn vow to renounce: the farmers-general, all the agents of the revenue, with their army of fifty thousand men, and that multitude of persons in office, even in the most inconsiderable towns, and their families and their friends: finally, all those belonging to the long robe, those parliaments, rivals of kings, that is to say, of their power, protecting or sacrificing the people for their own aggrandizement, and who, from being judges, aspired to become legislators; the inferior courts, which were in subordination to the parliaments; and that swarm of practitioners, who, all taken together, levied a tax upon the kingdom, which the imagination is afraid to calculate. This formidable mass of men was in possession of all France; they held her by a thousand chains; they formed, in a

body, what was termed *la haute nation*; all the rest was the people. These are the persons whom we have since seen uniting their voices and their clamours against the National Assembly, because, with a resolution and a courage unexampled, it hath suppressed all the abuses on which they depended for their existence.

The reformation of the finances, then, was a task impossible to one man alone; all that he could attempt, was to administer them, which, in the present penury of the state, was nothing more than the art of inventing such resources as were least alarming. M. Joly de Fleury, who succeeded M. Necker, invented *the ten sous pour livre*, and some duties of the customs at Paris. M. d'Ormesson came next, and brought with him into the ministry only virtues that were useless, and reaped no other harvest than that general esteem which accompanied him at his dismission, and which he hath ever since preserved. At length the direction of affairs was transferred to M. de Calonne.

Public opinion was not with him. Nevertheless, that class of men who were so ready to repose trust in others, and who stand in need of hope and of deception, fondly flattered themselves that this minister would snatch us from the abyss into which we were on the point of descending. The suspicious and clear-sighted foresaw that he would

would ruin France. However, he talked, at the outset, in so bold a strain, that the eyes of every one were dazzled. None ever united more daringness with a greater stock of abilities ; he possessed, over and above, the talent of pleasing and seducing : this, in France, and particularly at Court, was a merit of the first magnitude. But that avaricious and self-interested Court desired nothing of the Minister, but complaisance and gratifications ; perhaps it was gratified beyond its hopes. Not a single solicitation was left unattended to ; nothing was talked of but pensions and *douceurs*. Rambouillet was purchased for the King, and St. Cloud for the Queen : the Minister exchanged or mortgaged the domains of the Crown. Loans proved all-sufficient ; and the new Director of the Finances, promising to clear off all our debts in the course of twenty years, found present resources in our future expectations. Liquidating the debts of the Princes, paying the creditors of the state beforehand, encouraging useful and brilliant undertakings, were the means employed by this ready genius for continuing the infatuation. Never had the Court enjoyed more delicious times ; for it was the Court which consumed the choicest portion of the public property. Accordingly, its entertainments and prodigality exceeded every thing which can be said upon that subject. The

Court amused itself, and the people was ruined. But there is, in states addicted to borrowing, a secret regulator, the result of the calculations formed by all who speculate upon state affairs, and that is, public credit : it is composed of the several portions of confidence supplied by each ; it watches administration, penetrates her designs, and guesses at her most secret cogitations. Now, public credit was no more. Those loans, so easily accomplished during the virtuous ministry of M. Necker, could no longer be obtained under that of M. de Calonne. The taxes were now beyond all power of augmentation ; and the King, affected by the condition of his people, pronounced that sentence which determined the æra of the revolution : *I will have no more loans, nor taxes.*

Then it was that M. de Calonne, overpowered with the enormous burthen, sought, in his resolute and fruitful mind, the means of extricating himself from embarrassment, and of maintaining his credit. He was secretly occupied, for several months, in preparing projects of reformation, in which some of the claims of the people were allowed, and the clergy sacrificed, and in drawing up accounts, wherein the enormity of the *deficit* fell back upon his predecessors. Thus his glory was saved ; and he thought to acquire new glory, by

by endeavouring to persuade the nation that he was the regenerator of France.

But plans so very extensive could not be executed by a minister. He was likewise aware, that if, alone and unassisted, he presented them to the public, he should never be able to cope with that innumerable host of enemies, which his projects of reformation would infallibly raise against him. He conceived, therefore, the notion of propping up his schemes, in some measure, by the national inclination; and, unwilling to convoke the States-General, the bare idea of which affrighted him, he determined on convening an assembly of *Notables*, and at length laid his designs before the Sovereign. We have already observed, that Louis XVI. hath ever been desirous of rendering his people happy. He was dazzled by the useful reformation suggested to him by the Minister; he even frequently joined in the task, and took a pleasure in an employment, the thorns of which the dexterous courtier removed carefully out of sight. The King already considered the assembly of the *Notables* as the purest enjoyment which could be offered to a heart so well disposed to be beneficent. At length he gave orders for convoking the Assembly.

It is not possible to picture the surprise of the nation at this unexpected news, nor her indignation when she was apprized of the enormity of the *deficit*. The miseries of the kingdom had been felt, but not calculated.

Meanwhile the Notables assembled. The Minister, when laying his plans before them, presented them as orders, which the Assembly had only to obey. He had supposed, nor was the supposition unlikely, that men, most of whom were titled, and all of whom had occasion for the Court, and a nation accustomed to bow down, would not recoil at the King's orders, and that they would consider it as a mark of honour, to have acted a part in this great scene. He reckoned likewise upon the influence of the people, to which the suppression of some ruinous taxes, and the humiliation of the dignified clergy could not fail of being agreeable. He was in hopes also, that this same influence would operate upon the Parliaments, who would not dare to make opposition to the taxes which he proposed, lest they should forfeit the good opinion of the public, which constituted their whole strength. Finally, he reckoned upon the assistance of the King, who appeared to be much attached to his projects, and upon that of the Queen, and of the Princes, to all of whom he had rendered so great services. He had, moreover, disposed the different

ferent *bureaux* of the Notables in such a manner, as to secure a superior influence for himself.

These calculations were every one overturned. The character of immorality, annexed to the name of M. de Calonne, inspired a general suspicion of his designs. They were useful, they were expressive of the national wish; and, nevertheless, the nation rejected them, because they came from him.* The taxes, which were to compensate for what his œconomy cut away, were voted calamities; it was perceived, in the analyzing his projects, that money, after all, was what he wanted. His financial operations were of too recent a date, to admit of not imputing some of the *deficit* to himself. He had accused M. Necker, who thought it incumbent on him to answer the charge; and M. Necker was sent into exile; This oppressive act drew upon the Minister universal odium. The Notables, on their part, were desirous of seeing and knowing every thing; besides that their glory was interested, and that they were sensible of being overlooked by an enlightened and anxious nation, every Assembly which represents, or is supposed to represent, the nation, respects its own dignity, and understands the full extent of its rights. They were desirous of coming to the point, and

* Excellent.---We have seen disappointments of the like nature in this kingdom.

of inquiring into the cause of the *deficit*. M. de Calonne made no other answer, than that it was the pleasure of the King; and that they must pay obedience to it. He was directly charged with having exchanged the royal domains, and with several misdemeanors in his financial operations; and, whatever address he displayed in his different answers, the *tergiversations* which he necessarily practised, were daily diminishing his credit. He succeeded, however, in dismissing M. de Miromesnil, then Keeper of the Seals, and in substituting in his room, M. de Lamoignon, the adversary of the Parliaments. He wished to avail himself of the enmity of M. de Lamoignon to that body, in case they should imitate the resistance of the Notables. Master of the King's favour, whom he had bewitched, at first, by the charms of conversation, and afterwards by the apparent utility of his schemes, he suffered none to approach that monarch, and represented to him the opposition which he himself experienced, as the effect of particular interests. One enemy yet remained, and that enemy was M. de Breteuil, whom the astonishing ascendancy of M. de Calonne had deprived of the King's favour, but who enjoyed the protection of the Queen. M. de Calonne attempted to displace him, and was ruined. The Queen abandoned the Director of the Finances. All joined

joined in undeceiving the King, with respect to the perfidy of his Minister ; and M. de Calonne was disgraced. Upon this, he gave way to transports of the most furious description ; as he fled to his estate, he was a witness, on the way, to the indignation which pursued him ; and, his malversations having been laid before the Parliament, the dread of a decree compelled him to quit the kingdom.

The Notables were dissolved. They carried into their respective provinces their personal discontent, information which had never before come to light, and certain seeds of liberty, which were to blossom in the course of time. Even their insufficiency for functions of so high a nature, and for which they had had no lawful commission, (for there can be no such commission, unless it originate with the people) proclaimed every where this truth, that it was not in the power of particular persons to find a cure for so many maladies. It was well known that M. de Calonne had rejected, with dismay, the idea of convoking the States-General ; and all enlightened men agreed, that they were become unavoidable. Government, however, fought, for some time longer, with ill fortune, and wrestled with its own inability. A man, who, for some years, had directed a part of the revenues

ties of a province, imagined that he could save an empire overwhelmed. Ambitious beyond the measure of his talents, amiable, but weak, more ingenious than clear, more confident than resolute, M. de Brienne, who, all his life, had been aspiring to the ministry, by the underhand methods which led to that situation, had foreseen the fall of M. de Calonne, and had the fortune to succeed him. The nation once more began to entertain some hope. But the new Minister, who had come without plan, and who was hurried along by a torrent, which was carrying all before it, could do no more than quash the projects proposed by his predecessor, and adopt his imposts under forms still more disastrous. Upon this, the indignation became general. Paris now, for the first time, displayed those symptoms of energy, the consequences of which were foreseen by the clear-sighted. The Government, on its part, was desirous of being obeyed. The Parliament, esteeming this to be a favourable opportunity of justifying the appellation of Father of the People, which it used as a veil to its particular ambition, made some remonstrances; and the Court, having determined the King to hold a bed of justice, for the purpose of compelling the Parliament to enregister certain imposts, the latter thought fit to cut the Gordian knot; that

body

body declared, that it had no right to enregister imposts, to which the nation had not given her consent, and demanded the convocation of the States-General. At these terrible words, the Government was disconcerted. Paris gave a loose to the most lively joy; an universal spirit of hope now animated the nation; and the Parliament, exalted to the pinnacle of glory, became the idol of the people of France.

BOOK THE SECOND.

IN demanding the convocation of the States-General, the Parliament had yielded to the opinion of the public. None could know that opinion better, since that body incessantly studied it, as a support to their own authority. Several of the members, the young magistrates particularly, had a real affection for liberty : they were sincere in demanding the convocation of the States-General ; but the old magistrates had no other view in it, than the increase of their own power ; nay, it was the only mean which they could devise ; for the nation no longer imagined, either that the Parliaments had a right to hold their Kings in a state of pupillage, or that they were the States-General reduced to an inferior footing. These old men fancied, that they who had demanded the convocation of the States-General, were to play the chief part in that assembly, and that they should enter it accompanied by all the confidence of the people.

No sooner had the word been uttered, and the States-General demanded by the Parliament, and promised by the King, than the events followed

close one upon another. While the nation was occupied with the delightful idea of a regeneration, which henceforward was to shelter her from tyranny, they who were in the habit of exercising dominion over her, were intent upon the means of preserving their empire. But the imposing Colossus of public majesty was increasing every day, and at her feet was successively crushed every part of that frantic system of authority, which, for so long a time, had afflicted her with the most imperious domination.

And now none performed his duty, because none had really the public good at heart. It was necessary to save the State, and each was attentive to nothing but his own interest. The Court wished to destroy the Parliaments, and the Parliaments wished to counteract the Court: M. de Lamoignon was meditating their humiliation; M. de Brienne felt a wish to be first Minister; and, while so many indecent scenes were exhibited in this stormy theatre, the people saw with indignation that it was sacrificed continually to the interests and to the disputes of the great.

The Court banished the Parliament to Troyes. That body redeemed its exile by registering the prolongation of the *deuxieme vingtieme*, and thus displayed the exact measure of its patriotism. Meanwhile, amidst these differences amongst those

those who were contending for authority, the want of money was continually and severely felt. The adverse parties equally acknowledged the necessity of providing it ; and as that was the source of the inquietude of the people, and, consequently, of its courage, they who wished to enslave the people, thought it necessary to enter into a kind of truce with it. A successive loan was agreed upon between the ministry and several members of the Parliament, and it was to be ratified in a *réunion royale*, which was another point agreed upon. But each authority came thither with its particular pretensions ; the Parliament with the notion of a plurality of suffrages, the Keeper of the Seals with the idea of having the affair enregistered, without telling the votes, although he might have had a majority. The magistrates took fire : some amongst them asserted their pretensions with great vigour, supporting them with the interest of the people. M. d'Orleans asked the King, whether he was holding a bed of justice, and entered his protest against such arbitrary proceedings ? The King, alternately affected by the eloquent harangues of some amongst the magistrates, and with the insult which he conceived to be offered to his authority, experienced in his breast the tumult of conflicting passions. The loan did not take place ; but M. d'Orleans was banished, as were also

also M. Fréteau and M. Sabbatier, both of whom had spoken with much courage.

Although the Parliament had still less right to consent to taxes for the nation, than the Government had to order them, that body became the object of the public gratitude. Those arbitrary acts of power caused certain of the magistrates to be considered as so many martyrs ; and the people became attached to those who had been sufferers in its cause. Besides, the Parliament was, at that time, the only barrier against despotism ; we did not place our reliance on it, but we gave it our support.

The Government did nothing but commit blunders. It was at this time concentered in the persons of two ministers, M. de Brienne, become Archbishop of Sens, and the Keeper of the Seals. The former was prime minister, and exclusively enjoyed the confidence of his Sovereign ; the second was obliged to use the assistance of the former, in order to be enabled to overpower the Parliaments. They united their projects, as they had united their strength. M. de Lamoignon aimed two blows against the magistracy, which blows he considered as terrible ; one was, the creation of a number of grand bailiwicks, a measure calculated to diminish the jurisdiction, the credit, and the profits of the Parliaments ; the other was, the reformation of

the criminal laws. The people, particularly in the provinces, must have looked upon these alterations with pleasure. M. de Lamoignon laboured at this object, and caused others to labour at it, with a constancy peculiar to his character. Some short-sighted person proposed, at the same time, to M. de Brienne, the project of the *cour plénier*, where the edicts were to be enregistered. This court was an assemblage, without any leading principle, of princes, peers, magistrates, and military men; and these, it was imagined, could be advantageously introduced in the place of the Parliaments, with which the ancient kings of this realm had been encompassed. This was another blow aimed at the magistracy. The Keeper of the Seals, who had been adverse to the project, was obliged to yield to the ascendancy of M. de Brienne, for whose assistance he had very great occasion.

The Parliament had forfeited the public esteem, by opposing the establishment of the Provincial Assemblies, and the edict in favour of the Protestants, which the Parliament itself had patronized but ten years before, and which it was determined now to disown, because it was proposed by M. de Lamoignon. The Court restored the magistracy to favour. The harsh designs of M. de Lamoignon, and the extravagant idea of the *cour plénier* gave occasion

casion to this alteration. Some grand movements were made a little before the commencement of the month of May 1788 : the edicts were to be presented to all the Parliaments of the kingdom on one and the same day, in order to prevent their coalition : preparations were made for a forcible display of power, and every one expected some important event. This event was partly foreseen. The designs and the hatred of M. de Lamoignon were notorious. The Parliament had made ineffectual remonstrances ; the question was, not so much to divine the project, as to learn its full scope and destination. M. d'Esprémesnil found it out : he spared no expence to procure a copy of the edicts, which were then in the press ; he divulged the secret, inflamed the Parliament, and prevailed upon the Peers and the Parliaments of the kingdom to bind themselves by an oath not to register the edicts. Upon this, he and one of his colleagues were condemned to a glorious banishment.* The temple of justice was violated by an armed force, and two thousand men were employed to carry off two magistrates in the presence of the indignant people.

These measures were ill adapted to obtain a favourable reception, for the *cour plénier* and the

* 'A un exil jugé si glorieux.

bailiwicks. These two projects destroyed each other : the first was overwhelmed with public contempt ; the second found a powerful confederacy in the long robe ; so that a general combination was formed against the two ministers. The minds of men were elevated, in proportion to the humiliation which had been prepared for them. These great outrages committed against justice and good sense, appeared, in the eyes of the nation, an outrage against herself. It was with difficulty that she comprehended how the Government could thus shamelessly sport with public opinion, and place itself above the judgment of a whole people.

But this anxiety had no reference whatsoever to the people. We have already seen, that all those, who were the actors in such violent and indecent scenes, had no other object than the preservation or the augmentation of their own power. If the States-General were still talked of, it was only with a view of putting off their convocation : and, nevertheless, every day the necessity for such an assembly became more and more observable. The Government, in want of money, had no longer the courage even to think of asking for any. The ministers, by prostituting the royal authority in their quarrels, had in some measure annihilated it, since they had rendered it contemptible ; and the King, who wished and inten-

intended to do good, was condemned to the wretched state of being subservient to the passions of his courtiers.

Then it was, that the first minister, without money, without means, without credit, doing nothing, and thinking nothing, abandoned that authority which had already abandoned him. He resigned ; and the second benefit he conferred on us, after that of his resignation, was his advising the King to recall M. Necker.

M. de Lamoignon also offered to resign. The Court would gladly have retained him, but then it never would have been at peace with the Parliament. Accordingly he delivered up the seals, and, in his retreat, to which he had always looked forward, displayed the greatest degree of fortitude. He retired from public business, beloved by a family, which he himself loved ; and by his friends, who adhered to him notwithstanding his disgrace.

Amidst this confusion between the power and the ignorance of a weak ministry, France, terrified at the abyss which had been dug under her feet, no longer knew upon whom she was to rest her hopes of safety. The conduct of the Court had been like that of a choleric man, who finds himself in the wrong ; it had struck at every thing that opposed its inclinations. The magistracy, to a man, had been outraged, the deputies of Bretagne put in irons ; and the citizens of

Paris, who had expressed the public joy, by burning the two ministers in effigy, had been delivered up to the troops, and trampled by the cavalry. A depredatory government become tyrannical, and, at length, inhuman, stained the streets of the capital with blood, and sent terror into the provinces.

These excesses, committed by irritated ignorance, taught the people the dreadful lesson of avenging itself by blood. The kingdom was in an universal ferment, and every thing foreboded an approaching insurrection. The States-General, so often promised, were now demanded with double clamour, as the last resource of an oppressed and impoverished nation. At the extremity of the empire, a province, since so celebrated, claimed aloud its own rights, and the rights of a whole people. It demonstrated, by regular preparations for resistance, that the moment arrives at last, when the people, outraged and despised, becomes weary of its miseries. Already had the soldiery and the citizens of Grenoble announced, face to face, a scene of blood and slaughter, when intelligence was received of the resignation of the ministers, and of the recall of M. Necker. That instant the weapons drop from the hands of the citizens, who throw themselves into the arms of the soldiers; and both parties, amidst mutual embraces, give a loose

a loose to the most lively joy, and to all the deliciousness of hope.

The expectations of the nation were now universally turned towards M. Necker, as we wait for the beams of the sun, after a long and disastrous tempest. It was for him alone to enlighten, at length, the dismal gloom of administration, to re-animate internal confidence, to provide for immediate expences, for which there were no funds, and to re-establish our credit amongst foreigners. The Court itself was so convinced of this, that the Archbishop of Sens, the Queen, and the Count d'Artois, advised the King to recal M. Necker. No more than five hundred thousand livres were found in the royal treasury : the new minister raised instantly several millions for urgent occasions, and sought resources which might not infringe upon the rights of the States-General, the convocation of which appeared to him indispensable. By his advice the exiled magistrates were recalled, the parliaments restored to the exercise of their functions, the prisons thrown open, and whatever remained of the operations of the two last ministers was entirely suppressed and effaced. Above all, the general wish of the nation was attended to, and the convocation of the States-General determined on. In this manner did M. Necker prepare for the em-

pire of liberty, while, by his care, he protected it from the horrors of impending famine.

Then appeared, in broad day, those pretensions, which, since, have proved the source of such bitter discord. The people, the nation, those who have recovered the title of citizens, demanded States-General, which should not be vain and illusive, like those of which history made mention. And, for the same reason, they who dreaded that majestic and incommensurable power, of a great nation thus assembled, they who had retarded its convocation, they who had pretended to wish for it, and all those servile beings, long accustomed to the yoke of all sorts of oppressive usages, were desirous of States-General, similar to those which had sat in 1614. The Parliament, in particular, which began to foresee its future insignificance, when compared to so great a power, *decreed* that the States-General could be convoked in no other form : it recollects, that the Parliament had played a part upon that occasion. This pretension to regulate the process of the national authority entirely ruined those magistrates in the public estimation.

But the Third Estate, that immense portion of an enlightened and celebrated nation, that mass of men who really and truly did compose the nation, took fire at being assimilated to the Commons, newly enfranchised in the reign of Philip

Philip le Bel, and at the attempt to restrict them, in 1788, to forms established for the clowns, and demi-slaves, of 1302. In fact, it was worth while to feel, that the human species had acquired dignity.

M. Necker, not deeming it proper for the council to decide, amidst these opposite pretensions, the multitude of questions relative to the convocation of the States-General, again assembled the Notables, for the purpose of consulting them. They had deserved well of their country; and he presumed, from their former firmness, in favour of their future impartiality.

Meanwhile, the provinces, in a ferment, gave a loose to all those emotions, which were excited in every heart, by a sense of the nation's miseries, by indignation at the outrages which she had suffered from a host of tyrants, and by the hope of a better order of things. A splendid example was given to them by Dauphiny. After courageously repulsing the bloody menaces of despotism, that province boldly planned the organization of the whole kingdom. It had lost its Assembly of States, that phantom of liberty in an empire which was absolute, and it demanded to have its Assembly of States again. The three orders united, after having collected their strength, obtained from Government permission to hold a legal assembly. And now wisdom,
that

that enlightener of the brave, presided in all their deliberations : and they drew, for their own particular States, a plan, which was deemed capable of serving as a model for all the other provinces, and as the elements of a National Assembly. Thus did Dauphiny excite the admiration, and the emulation of the whole kingdom. In spite of the prohibitions of the agents of the Court, the three orders met together in various places, and there composed assemblies. But it was principally in the *Pays d'états*, that the first impulse was communicated. Versailles saw, with surprize, deputies arriving from Bretagne, from Languedoc, from Vivarais, from Velay ; and, what was best of all, for the first time was heard there that masculine style of liberty, which makes despotism lower her tone. The manner in which these deputies were received, and the accounts which they gave of that reception to their provinces, augmented the indignation and the energy of the people.

At the same time, and as a consequence of the progress of knowledge in that Third Estate, to degrade which so many efforts had been made, and to despise which its enemies affected, a multitude of men of letters reminded it of its rights. Some, ascending to the very origin of the monarchy, traced, in characters of fire, the imperceptible march of despotism, the absolute power

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of twenty tyrants, and the progressive degradation of the nation. Others found, in the history of the States-General, a series of evidences of the national authority, and proved that the nation is the sovereign. Many, mounting still higher, and climbing even to the primitive and imprescriptible rights of nations, demonstrated to every mind, that it is absurd to invoke abuses improperly termed usages, in presence of a people which is in a condition to claim its rights. They all agreed, that there was but one opportunity for recovering our liberty ; that, should we suffer it to escape, we must be pronounced unworthy of it ; and that the *deficit* was the salvation of France. The writings of the sage Mably were, in particular, spread abroad : Mably, who, at a time when truth took refuge in the closets of men of letters, had foreseen, predicted, and, in a manner, ordered the States-General. His book became the catechism of the French. A considerable number of military officers, who had assisted at the revolution of the United States, had brought home with them an indelible remembrance of the charms of equality and liberty, which they had beheld in a nation of brothers. These men, who were all nobles, had learned to judge of the vanity of such a title, when compared to that of citizens.

zens. Paris was a very reservoir * of knowledge. That city abounded in well-informed persons, with whose influence the Government, still blind, was unacquainted, or else that Government was incapable of arresting it. The circles, the societies, which, within these few years, have been formed in imitation of the English clubs, spoke of liberty, as if she were already their own. There was one society in particular, which met at the house of a young magistrate, who hath since had a great share in accomplishing the revolution. It maintained an active correspondence throughout the kingdom, and contributed, by disseminating simultaneous ideas, to pave the way for simultaneous inclinations and exertions. In fine, the people, which is incensed at public evils, because it supports the entire weight of them, endured with indignation the disdainful epithet of *Third Estate*, which seemed to imply a confirmation of a constitutional servitude.

Authority was not strong enough to overpower so many adversaries. The liberty of the press did actually exist : attempts were made, but in vain, to restrict it by secret orders ; books issued from every quarter, and several were composed in

* In the original, “ un foyer de lumières.”—I cannot say that I am much pleased with the metaphor.

such a style, as to be adapted to the capacities of the meanest of the people. At last Government was under the necessity of letting us write and say every thing. Some of the Princes of the Blood opposed, to this inundation of literature, * a memorial, at that time famous, in which were stated all the pretensions of what hath, since, been termed the Aristocracy, that is to say, the privileges of an inconsiderable number of persons, living at the expence of all, or degrading all by their authority. This memorial, like every other imprudent act of the grandees, served only to increase the resistance and the vigour of the people.

The forms of 1614, which, at first, had appeared offensive, were at length become ridiculous. The Parliament perceived this, when it was too late; and, retracting its error, decreed on the 5th of December, 1788, that, in determining those forms, it had never been its intention to determine the respective numbers of the deputies of the three orders. This was one of the principal questions agitated in the Assembly of Notables. Vain had been the hope of M. Necker, that this Assembly would assume the complexion of the national opinion: it was almost entirely composed of persons enjoying pri-

* Tant d'écrits.

vileges

vileges. The *Esprit de Corps* presided in it, the *Esprit de Corps* prevailed in it. The bureau of Monsieur was the only one where it was decided, by a majority of votes, that the Third Estate should have a number of representatives, equal to that of the two other orders taken together. Such was the wish expressed by all the communities of the kingdom, which, freeing themselves successively from the local dominations, under which each had suffered, had come to resolutions, and transmitted them to the Court: and the greatest part of them declared, that, in confining themselves to an equality of representatives, they did not adhere to the proportion of the population, and that they remained rather below what they had a just right to claim.

One thousand six hundred and fourteen, which some pronounced *sixteen hundred and fourteen*, was then the phrase which divided the minds of men: it was in every person's mouth, because, in reality, it included every question which agitated the kingdom, and which embarrassed the Court. The Parliamentarians, as magistrates and as nobles, had a double interest in preserving the forms of 1644. The Clergy and the Nobility were of the same way of thinking; and the Third Estate, who saw in those words nothing but its own humiliation, and the preservation of privileges, had pursued them with excessive ridicule,

and vowed to proscribe them utterly. But the Notables, who were, for the most part, either princes, or nobles, or persons high in office, had not courage to exalt themselves above their interests and their prejudices. Prostrate before those idol and antique forms, which, perhaps, they would have rejected, had they been contrary to their wishes, they decided, that the different bailiwicks, which were all unequal in population, should nevertheless send an equal number of deputies, and exerted themselves to maintain the deliberation by orders, instead of man by man.

It was upon this discussion, which interested every heart, that the destiny of the States-General, and of the French Constitution, altogether depended. The two parties, for they were already formed, looked forward to a revolution. The privileged orders could not but be well aware, that, should the deliberation be man by man, the equality of voices possessed by the Commons, and supported by those of the Nobles and Ecclesiastics, who sided with the Third Estate, would give to the latter a preponderance in the scale. They rejected this measure, therefore, and relied principally upon the ancient usage, and upon the form of convocation observed in 1614: for the same reason, they would not permit the most considerable bailiwicks to

send

send a greater number of deputies, than those the limits and population of which were not at all extensive.

It is easy to imagine the embarrassed situation of the Council, between the people, the united voices of which were so powerful, and the privileged orders, who possessed so overbearing an ascendancy. M. Necker, whose character and virtue accompanied him every where, but who was wearied out by the grandees, and by the Court; whom the habit of domineering over the will of others hath accustomed to prescribe their own will as the law, nevertheless prevailed on the Council to decree, that the deputies to the States-General should amount to, at least, the number of one thousand; that the number deputed by each bailiwick should be in a ratio, compounded of the population, and the taxes of that bailiwick; that the number of the deputies of the Third Estate should be equal to that of the two other orders taken together. These decisions formed the basis of the convocations. As to the question, Whether the deliberations should be by orders, or man by man, and, consequently, whether the chambers should be separate or united? the Council did not presume to determine it. It was not proper it should; for the separation of the orders should be previous to the meeting of the States-General, and,

and, perhaps, that meeting might never have taken place. The decision was sent up to the States-General themselves, that is, to the two parties when assembled face to face. This was really giving the victory to the stronger, as experience hath since demonstrated. Accordingly, at Court, cabal and rage broke out with redoubled violence against M. Necker; as if, at a convocation demanded by the general will, it had been his duty to consult the Court; as if it had not been proved experimentally, that it was more prudent to listen to public opinion, than to offend it, in order to incur the disgrace of submitting to it at last! It was furthermore imputed to him as a crime, that he had admitted a considerable number of parish-ministers,* who were generally supposed to favour the Third Estate, with which they were by birth connected: but here the Court forgot all that the *Esprit de Corps* could do, as a counterpoise to such influence. The separation which had taken place between the Third Estate and the two other Orders, in most of the assemblies of the bailiwicks, proclaimed the political schism, and that mighty conflicts would arise between privileges and the interest of the public.

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These assemblies, which put six millions of men in motion, were a new reservoir of knowledge for the Third Estate. The Nobility and the Clergy, in separate chambers, drew up instructions, the object of which was to require, first, their own advantage, and, then, the good of the public. They all, however, renounced their pecuniary privileges: they consented to pay taxes like any other subjects. The instructions of the Third Estate, which were hastily drawn up in the course of a few days, demanded a suppression of more abuses than the National Assembly, in the space of two years, hath been able to destroy, and a more extensive reformation than it could hope ever to accomplish; for although we did not, at that time, presume to extend our hopes to the events which have since taken place; although the National Assembly hath made those radical reformations, which have crumbled all at once that entire mass of abuses, the first and chief of which was top-heavy, the collection of instructions drawn up by the Third Estate contains yet a multitude of important requisitions, which must be referred to posterity. But all agreed in demanding a constitution, liberty, that the nation should resume her rights, and that the revenue should be no longer at the mercy of court-depredation. Each body, however,

ever, understood, that the fruits of this liberty were to be reaped by it alone, and demanded the conservation of its privileges. These dissensions shewed manifestly that the States-General would either do nothing, or that they would do every thing, should the Third Estate prevail. In each order such Deputies were chosen, as were considered the most likely to defend its rights or its pretensions. Those of the Third Estate set out, accompanied by the benedictions of the people, who promised to reward them with crowns of glory, or to stigmatize them with infamy.

While the minds of all were thus agitated by the most imperious passions, the Court saw but too well that the tempest would burst on her. But the publication of the instructions of the Third Estate, its pretensions, the innumerable productions spread abroad, all concurred to make her sensible of the necessity of combining every power and every interest against that spirited and determined order. M. Necker was desirous that the States-General should be convened at Paris; but the King preferred Versailles, where the communication between the Court and the Deputies must be more prompt and more practicable: peradventure the Court imagined that there they might be found more manageable. The Deputies of the Third Estate, however, ap-

peared there to a disadvantage ; for, dispatched from all corners of the kingdom, and most of them but little acquainted with the world, they found themselves on a sudden transported into a city, where every thing bore the stamp of despotism, and where intrigue had spread her nets on every side. The agents of the Court had already opened conferences at the house of Madame de Polignac. Their measures were devised for uniting the two superior orders, and for keeping the Commons in a state of dependence and insignificance. These last felt the necessity of combining ; and, by a kind of natural instinct, which impels men to unite their forces, the Deputies of each province had private meetings amongst themselves, until the *Breton* club absorbed all the others. Such members of the Nobility, as afterwards were the first to join the Commons, met likewise in a society, to which several of the Deputies of the Third Estate resorted. From the very first, and even previous to the opening of the States-General, the Deputies of the Commons perceived the humiliation which was preparing for them. Faithful to the usages of 1614, for which the ancient archives had been ransacked, the government assigned to the two first orders magnificent robes of state, and to the Commons the dress of lawyers, because, in fact, at the ancient States-General, the deputies of that

that order were almost all men of the law. But it was ridiculous to enjoin citizens, who were of all professions, to wear a garment of this kind, which made them look as if they were acting a comedy. These puerilities, which are of no consequence in the eyes of men of sense, offend us, on account of the intention which had led to them. The like distinctions were affected at the presentation of the Deputies of the King. There both the folding-doors were opened for the Clergy and the Nobility,* and the King received these two orders in his closet; only one of the folding-doors was opened for the Deputies of the Commons, and the King received them in his chamber, where they filed off with rapidity, after having waited a long time, crowded together in the hall of Hercules. The like distinctions again appeared at the procession of the States-General, where the dignified clergy, in a blaze of gold, and the grandees of the kingdom, collected about the canopy, displayed the utmost pomp, while the Third Estate might have been likened to the mourners at a funeral.* But this long cohort represented the nation; and the

* Mirabeau says, that only *one* of them was opened for the *Nobility*.---See his *Account of what passed at Versailles, on the 2d of May, 1789*, in the second volume of his translated Speeches.

† Sembloit porter le deuil.

people was so sensible of that circumstance, that it bestowed on its own Deputies reiterated applause. It shouted, *Vive le Tiers Etat!* as it hath since shouted, *Vive la Nation!* The impolitic distinction thus produced an effect, the very reverse of what the Court had expected; the Third Estate recognized its defenders and its fathers, in the men with the long cravats and black gowns, and its enemies in the rest of the procession. In fine, the manner in which the Deputies of the Third Estate were received and treated, and the contemptuous proposals of persons belonging to the Court, augmented and completed their disgust. Add to this, that these Deputies, who had never before travelled beyond their own provinces, and who had just quitted the spectacle of the wretchedness then reigning in the towns and rural districts, had now before their eyes daily proofs of the proud profusion of Louis XIV. and of his successor, and of the far-fetched voluptuousness* of the present Court of France. That castle, † they were told, cost two hundred millions of money; the enchanted palace of Saint-Cloud cost twelve: it was not known what was the expence of that little box, Trianon. And the honest men made answer, “ This magnifi-

* Recherches voluptueuses.

† The palace at Versailles,

cence is the produce of the painful sweat of the people."

Paris was, at this time, the center of public opinion, and there that opinion was pronounced with energy. The Court perceived that the neighbourhood of that immense city would afford a grand support to the Deputies of the people; and, accordingly, the Court was soon provided with a pretence for quartering there a powerful force, for the purpose of intimidation. There lived, in the suburbs of Paris, a worthy citizen, named Réveillon, who employed at his manufactory a great number of workmen, to whom he was a benefactor and a father. He was the cause of their earning, yearly, two hundred thousand livres, and paid them from thirty to fifty sous a day. On a sudden, a report is spread, that this person had reduced the wages of his workmen to fifteen sous; that he had been heard to say, that bread was too good for them, and that he had been driven out of his district for his inhuman declarations. The inhabitants of the two suburbs of Paris flock together, imposed on by this calumny. The town fills with a throng of strangers, whom none had ever beheld before, and who, after having burnt an image, which they called *Réveillon*, condemned the original to die. These wicked wretches, after spreading terror through the city, spent the

night in celebrating the vilest orgies ; nor did the police take any measures to suppress these outrages, either on that night, or on the following day. A battalion of French guards, then in Paris, might have prevented all this mischief ; and they had been frequently called out upon occasions of less importance. Some soldiers, however, were sent to protect the house of Réveillon ; but they could not resist the crowd which was continually increasing. Money, scattered with profusion, by multiplying the miscreants, augmented their audacity. At length this rabble, having forced into the house, plundered it, destroyed the furniture, and committed, both there, and in the cellars, and in the garden, every ruinous excess that could be thought of. Then a formidable detachment of the military made its appearance. The French and Swiss guards for a long time endured the insults and attacks of this intoxicated and outrageous multitude, and at length received orders to defend themselves, or, more properly speaking, to commit murder. Some cavalry and infantry arrived to their assistance, and some artillery, which was pointed at the Fauxbourg Saint-Antoine. The crowd was dispersed by the bayonet, or by ball, and several paid with their lives the forfeit of their iniquity. But Paris beheld with indignation that armed host, assembled apparently to protect

protect her, and which, in fact, only menaced her liberty. This excess of precaution caused the motive to be suspected. The soldiers themselves detested the service which had been required from them, and from that day forth became citizens. If the agents of despotism devised this infernal *stratagem*, as was afterwards believed, it makes one crime more to be added to all those, of which despotism had already become guilty.

Paris was yet scarce recovered from her indignation and her terror, when the sitting of the States-General commenced. Every measure had been taken for marking, in the strongest manner, the distinction of the Orders ; for there was a determined intention to maintain it. Besides the difference of dress, of which we have made mention, and that of places, a particular door had been assigned to the Commons ; they were to pass through a back door, connected with a corridor, where they were crowded together for several hours, * while the King, the Court, and the Deputies of the church and of the nobility, entered in state at the great door. After the long and tedious ceremony of calling over the

* See also Mirabeau's *Account of what passed at Versailles on the 5th of May, 1789*, in the volume of Speeches already referred to. One would imagine that the Court of Louis XVI. wished to try his people's patience to the utmost.

names, which exhausted the patience of the Deputies of the Commons, they were introduced into the places which were destined for their reception, in that fine hall, the galleries of which were filled by the men and women of the Court.

The paternal discourse of the King proclaimed the beneficent dispositions of his heart, and that affection for the people, not the sole, but the first virtue of monarchs, and which, frequently, hath compensated for the want of all the rest. The speech delivered by the keeper of the seals was not heard, and, consequently, it made no impression. But the Deputies both heard, and listened with the deepest attention, to the speech of M. Necker.* It was, indeed, a moment highly interesting, when the Minister, organ of the King and of his Council, was, by a grand act of publication, about to make known, to such a number of attentive persons, the real sentiments of the Court; for that, in particular, was what the Deputies of the Commons were expecting. It must not be forgotten, that each order was come with its pretensions, and that the contest had commenced, even before they were assembled at Versailles. Too much occupied with the interests which they severally had in charge,

* See a severe criticism on this Speech, in the article by Mirabeau, already quoted.

they never inquired whether the speech of the Minister was purely his own work : whether restrained by a situation in which, however, none wished to see any other than himself, he ought and could substitute his own private opinions, instead of those of the Council ; whether the Court did not already accuse him of an inclination to lessen the royal authority ; whether it belonged to any person to decide upon great questions, which already produced a difference of sentiments in the nation ; and whether, in speaking even according to the wishes of the Commons, the minister might not have just reason to apprehend, that the two first Orders would instantly make a separation, for the consequences of which the kingdom was not yet prepared.

The two first Orders, who knew how far they might rely upon the dispositions of the Court, did not manifest any discontent at the discourse of M. Necker, notwithstanding the hatred which they bore him. But the deputies of the Commons received it with great coldness. Seated upon their back benches, and observing a silence suited to the austerity of their apparel, they expected every moment to hear something which might correspond with their own exalted ideas, ideas which they have since fully realized. Equality and liberty ; these two words were already

ready become the bond of union amongst the French. The people and its representatives had been led, by the course of events, to desire a general reformation, which the Council did not promise them, and which the injustice of the Court, and of the two first Orders, accelerated.

From this moment the conflict began. That very evening the Deputies of the Commons, assembled by provinces, agreed that they would meet in the hall of the States-General, that they would consider it as the national hall, and that they would there expect the other Orders, for the purpose of deliberating in common : to this line of conduct they unalterably adhered. In fact, what end would it have answered, for the Third Estate to obtain the moiety of the suffrages at the States-General, if, by the separation into three distinct chambers, it had, in reality, no more than a third ? The next day, the two first Orders assembled, each in a separate chamber, and the Commons repaired to the national hall. There they waited without effect for the Deputies of the Clergy and of the Nobles ; and, considering themselves in the light of Deputies presumptive only, whose powers were not yet verified, they attended merely to the regulation of their assembly, without allowing themselves to proceed to any deliberation. In the two other

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chambers, the Deputies began with verifying their powers, each in his proper order. This was tacitly declaring, that they would not unite with the Deputies of the Third Estate.

Accordingly, the dispute relative to the voting by orders, or man by man, and for which they had been prepared, was postponed for that upon the verification of the powers in common. The Deputies of the people said, that, even though the Orders should deliberate separately, which the Commons did not think that they were authorised to do, the powers ought to be verified in common ; and that as each Order was to deliberate upon general propositions, it behoved each to know, whether the Deputies of the other two were legally appointed. The King might have required, at the commencement, that the Deputies should verify their powers in his presence : and thus this altercation would never have taken place. The Court was reproached with having here committed an error ; but the dispute might have arisen, upon the question relative to the separation of the chambers, and that dispute might have terminated, in like manner, by the victory of the Third Estate, which could never mean to content itself with only one third of the suffrages. Meanwhile, the Commons repeatedly invited the other Orders

Orders to join them in the national hall, for the purpose of proceeding, in concert, to the common verification of their powers. The Nobles, without paying attention to the remonstrances of the Commons, and giving way to all the haughtiness of their character, continued to verify their powers in their own chamber. But the Deputies of the Clergy suspended that operation ; and, although the Nobles signified to the Commons, on the 13th of May, that they had declared themselves legally constituted, the Commons paid no regard to such signification, nor departed, in the least, from their system of inactivity. The Clergy, however, divided in opinion, and veiling its pretensions with the love of peace, which ought, in fact, to be its character, proposed to the other Orders to name a committee of conciliation, which might labour to promote a good understanding amongst the deputies. The Nobles having agreed to this, the Commons in their turn consented to it. They deemed, that moderation was well adapted to the goodness of their cause, and that, in thus prolonging, through the fault of the two other Orders, an inaction prejudicial to the general good, they should, ere long, be strengthened with all the force of public opinion. They were not mistaken. The conferences which took place

place at the house of the keeper of the seals, in the presence of the King's ministers, served only to prove, that the two privileged Orders still pretended to form bodies distinct from that of the people. The King caused a plan of conciliation to be proposed to the three Orders, which plan, at bottom, was not agreeable to any of them ; but the Nobles, in affecting to accede to it, still referred to all their own resolutions, and adhered to all their pretensions. They incurred, therefore, the blame of the improper proceedings ; and all that the Commons had to do, was to cast upon the Nobility the odium of every mischief which attended the refusal.

Meanwhile, the sittings of the Commons, and the conferences of their commissioners, engrossed the attention of all France. The nation was beginning to tire of these delays. The Commons presented an address to the King, in order to explain their motives for proceeding to immediate action ; they sent, for the last time, a deputation to the two other Orders, inviting them to repair to the national hall, to the end that the powers might be there verified in common, and giving them notice that the calling over the bailiwicks would take place on the same day. In fact, the Commons proceeded to that business ; and it is worthy of remark, that three parish-priests of

Poitou,

Poitou, persuaded that the powers ought to be verified in common, came with theirs to the national hall. All the powers of the Deputies of the Commons were verified ; and the moment was now arrived, when that body was to form itself into an active assembly.

The coalition of the two first Orders with the Court was well known. Notice was given that the Commons, considering themselves as a very great majority of the nation, would constitute themselves a National Assembly ; and the ministry looked upon this step as an instance of folly, which the King ought not to authorize. The most resolute amongst the Commons, deeming the representatives of the people to be the true representatives of the nation ; but knowing likewise what assaults they should have to sustain, sought for a term which might preserve their own idea, without exasperating the Court. They were not certain that the nation was sufficiently advanced, to second them with all the force of public will ; they were apprehensive, on her account, of consequences which might lead to the most violent measures, on the part of those in authority. But a long debate being commenced, there resulted from it such a display of political knowledge, and so much energy of patriotism,

tism, * that the Deputies at length came to an almost unanimous resolution: It was on the 17th of June 1789, in presence of an immense concourse of spectators, both from Paris and from the Court, that the Deputies of the Commons constituted themselves *The National Assembly*. The hall resounded with acclamations of *Vive le Roi et l'Assemblée Nationale*. But when the representatives of the people rose up in silence, in order to take the oath to execute with zeal and probity the functions with which they were charged, every heart was deeply affected, and enthusiasm took possession of all present: each felt that the nation was now lifted to her just height. Several citizens hurried to the capital, in order to spread the news, while the National Assembly, devoting the first exercise of its power to public good, decreed that the taxes, though not consented to by the nation, should continue to be received; that one of its first labours would be to consolidate the public debt; and that a committee should be appointed to consider of the means of remedying the scarcity which afflicted the kingdom. Such was the conclusion of that memorable day, which rendered to the

* See the first Speech of Mirabeau, in the first volume of the English selection from his *Labours at the National Assembly*.

French nation, the rights which belong to men as united in civil society. The Court and the privileged orders trembled ; and on that clouded horizon, whence the thunder hath been so often launched, inauspicious tempests were ere long seen collecting.

BOOK THE THIRD.

THE revolution of France had just taken a vast stride, in the space of a single day ; the Third Estate was become the nation. France, after having lost her States-General, recovered them with a degree of glory, superior to what that assembly had enjoyed in former ages, when the Commons had displayed nothing but an ineffectual energy, as the privileged orders were then the stronger party. But the nature of things, and the regular course of a people, which, rolling on through successive centuries, grew greater in its progress, had imparted to this Third Estate an imposing stability. And when, of late, the privileged orders had lost somewhat of that greatness, which consists altogether in opinion, the error which they committed in maintaining all their pretensions, must necessarily occasion their being vanquished in the contest. It is not clear, that, had the Nobles, from the very first, united with the Third Estate, instead of revolting from it, they would not have preserved several of their privileges ; but they demeaned themselves, from the begin-

ning, with the highest degree of haughtiness, and proclaimed that schism which they found it impossible to support. The superior Clergy, studying the strength of the two parties, and procrastinating the affair, according to its usual policy, seduced the Nobles with the hope of a coalition which was improbable, since the Clergy itself was divided. In fine, both these orders were deceived by the idea, that their connection with the Court would stop the fury of a torrent, to which themselves, although united, could oppose but a feeble dyke, and which acquired a new force from the obstruction.

However, as soon as the Commons were constituted a National Assembly, the nobility, the bishops, and that part of the Court which had never wished for the States-General, began to be sensible of the necessity of combining against the power of a body, for which there had never been a precedent. A great number of parish-ministers had verified their powers in the National Assembly ; thence they returned to their own chamber, with an intention to support the cause of the nation. In the chamber of the Nobles, a feeble minority defended the same cause with inferior success ; for already had the Clergy, by a majority of one hundred and forty-nine voices against one hundred and twenty-six, determined on the verification of the powers in

com-

common, with some few amendments. Every thing seemed to declare, that the union of the orders was unavoidable, when a resolution was entered into to prevent it ; and, pursuant to the usual progress of the passions when provoked, precipitate measures were adopted, and it was decided that force should be employed. None amongst them was yet aware, that the representatives of the people are the first in the rank of powers.

The King and the Court went to Marley for eight days. M. Necker was at Paris with his sister-in-law, who was then at the point of death ; and the Court held those little councils, at which was formed that unwise plan, which soon after was exhibited to the public. It is said, that the Archbishop of Paris went to throw himself at the King's feet, in order to represent to him that his authority was ruined, and the State subverted, if he did not take prompt measures, and dictate to the Commons the supreme will of their sovereign. The King, however, had been persuaded, that he could infallibly and utterly discredit the National Assembly, by granting, of himself, almost every thing that his people had demanded. It was represented to him, that he was beloved by the nation, that she would esteem herself happy to possess at once from his beneficence, what she would find some difficulty

in obtaining from her representatives ; that the latter, by opposing his paternal intentions, would prove to all the world that they were nothing but a faction, and would be ruined in the public esteem. But, while attempts were thus made to work on him, by motives well adapted to actuate his heart, he was made sensible of the necessity of sending for some troops, for the purpose of overawing the citizens of Paris, whose movements were beginning to appear formidable. Accordingly, all those secret preparations were made, whilst the citizens, intoxicated with the general satisfaction, had entertained for the National Assembly an admiration and a respect, proportioned to the courage which it manifested.

On the 20th of June, three days after the National Assembly had been constituted, the members of the Clergy were to join it. But, while the Deputies were repairing to the hall, a proclamation, made by the heralds at arms, and posted up in every quarter, gave notice that the sittings were suspended, and that the King would, on the 22d, hold a *séance royale*. The reason assigned for shutting up the hall, during the space of three days, was, the necessity of preparing the decorations for the throne. This puerile reason served to prove, that the sole intention was to prevent the junction of the Clergy with

with the Commons, the majority of the former having adopted the system of the latter. Meanwhile, the Deputies arrive one after another, and experience the most lively indignation, * on finding the doors shut and guarded by a band of soldiers. They ask one another what power hath the right of suspending the deliberations of the national representatives. They talk of assembling upon that very spot, or of going to the terrace at Marly, there to exhibit to the King the spectacle of the Deputies of the people; to invite him to come amongst them in a *séance* truly royal and paternal, and more worthy of his heart, than that with which he threatens them. Permission is given to M. Baillie, their president, to enter the hall attended by some of the members, in order to take away the papers; and there he protests against the arbitrary commands, which cause the national hall to be shut against the representatives. At length he assembles the Deputies in the tennis-court of Versailles, become for ever famous by the gallant resistance made, by the first who bore the title of representatives of the French nation. They encourage one another as they pass along; they pro-

* See the eloquent speech of Mirabeau, (in the second volume of the translation) on the motion for annulling the imperative mandates, and for fixing the renewal of the Assembly, after completing the Constitution.

mise never to separate, and to resist to the last extremity. They reach the building ; they send for such of the Deputies as are ignorant of what is passing. A sick deputy causes himself to be carried thither. The people, crowding about the door, bestows repeated benedictions on its representatives. Some soldiers, in disobedience to orders, come and perform the duty of sentinels, at the entrance of this new sanctuary of freedom. A voice is heard, requiring that each member should take the oath never to separate from the rest, and to assemble with his brethren wheresoever they might think fit, until the constitution and regeneration of the kingdom should be completed. All swear, all sign, one excepted ; and this remarkable circumstance is recorded upon the journal. The Court, blind to consequences, had no conception that this vigorous act was to overturn its whole design. The prejudices which reigned in that exalted atmosphere, were the cause that a convention of citizens, advocates, plebeians, was looked upon with the utmost contempt. The dignity of the people, and of its representatives, was not yet acknowledged.

It seems, however, that the Court might have opened its eyes, with respect to the blunder which it had committed, and might have altered its intended measures. Nevertheless, it persisted

histed in them : the King, indeed, put off the *séance royale* from the twenty-second to the twenty-third, in order that there might be time for pulling down the scaffolds, on which the National Assembly had permitted a considerable number of spectators to be accommodated. This trivial circumstance increased the catalogue of court blunders ; for it gave the majority of the clergy time to form a junction with the Commons. On the 22d, the Deputies, roaming the streets of Versailles, in search of a proper place for their sittings, at length assembled in the church of St. Louis ; and, fortunately, the place added to the majesty of the convention. The hundred and forty-nine members of the majority of the clergy, amongst whom were several bishops, came to verify their powers : two members of the nobility of Dauphiny did the same. This day, less illustrious than that of the tennis-court, was equally interesting, both from the speeches which were pronounced, and from the substantial effect of which it must have been productive.

At length the *séance royale* took place. It was attended with all that exterior magnificence, which for a while imposed on the multitude : but it was not a gilt throne, nor a superb canopy, nor heralds at arms, nor nodding plumes, which could intimidate freemen. The court was still unacquainted with this truth, which, however, is to be

be found in every history. The numerous guard, which was posted round the hall, struck no terror into the hearts of the Deputies ; on the contrary, it added to their courage.* The same error was repeated, which had been committed on the 5th of May, of assigning a separate door to the Commons, and leaving them exposed in the corridor connected with it, to the rain, which was very violent, while the other orders were seating themselves on their benches of ceremony. At length the Commons were introduced.

The object of the speech and of the declarations of the King was, to maintain the distinction of the orders ; to annul the celebrated decrees, by which the Commons had erected themselves into a National Assembly ; to proclaim, in thirty-five articles, *the benefits which the King was granting to his people* ; and to declare to the representatives, that, should they forget the King, the King would accomplish the people's happiness without them. Add to this, that all those imperious forms were observed, which are customary, when the King holds a bed of justice in the parliament. In these benefits, which the King was thus promising to the nation, no mention was made, either of the Constitution so much desired, or of the participation of the States-General in all acts of

* Undoubtedly ; it was very natural that it should.

legislation, or of the responsibility of ministers, or of the liberty of the press ; and almost every thing which constitutes political and civil liberty, was passed over in total silence. Nevertheless, the pretensions of the privileged orders were maintained ; the despotism of the ruler was sanctioned, and the States-General were abased, and subjected to his power. The prince commanded, but did not consult ; and such was the blindness of his secret advisers, that they persuaded him to insult the representatives of the nation, and to quash their decrees, as if they had been only an assembly of Notables. In fine, and this was the great object of the *séance royale* ; the King commanded the Deputies to break up immediately, and to repair, on the following day, to their respective chambers, there to resume their sittings.

He withdrew. He was followed by all the Nobles, and by a part of the clerical order. The Deputies of the Commons, motionless and silent on their seats, with difficulty suppressed the indignation which possessed them, on seeing the majesty of the nation thus treated with contempt and outrage. The workmen, pursuant to orders for that purpose, proceed to take down, with noise and bustle, that throne, those benches, those stools of state, the insolent decorations of the *séance royale* ; but, struck with the immoveable firmness

firmness of the fathers of their country, they pause, and suspend their operations. The vile agents of despotism make haste to acquaint the King with what they call the disobedience of the Assembly. The grand master of the ceremonies is dispatched to the national hall, where, addressing himself to the president, "Sir," says he, "you know the intentions of the King." The president makes answer, That the representatives of the people receive orders from no person whatever; that, as to the rest, he will take the opinion of the Assembly. But the fiery Mirabeau, anticipating the debate, addressed to the grand master these celebrated words, which every Frenchman hath by heart: "Go, tell those who sent you hither, that we sit here by the power of the people, and that nothing shall expel us but the power of the bayonet."* When the grand master of the ceremonies had withdrawn, the debate commenced. M. Camus spoke first; thundering against the despotism of that bed of justice, called a *séance royale*, that daring attempt upon the freedom of the States-

* See the first volume of his translated speeches.—These memorable expressions have been since engraved upon the bust of Mirabeau, which was executed for the Society of *Friends to the Constitution*. A print of this hath been struck off, in which we behold, not the downcast look of a cunning conspirator, but the ardent air and attitude of a noble-hearted man, who sincerely meant the welfare of his country: and such a man was *Mirabeau*.

General, he moved, that the Assembly should persist in its decrees, decrees which no authority can annul. Several members supported this motion with equal vigour: and the Abbé Siéyes, collecting himself coolly amidst the general indignation, cried, “ Gentlemen, you are to-day “ just what you were yesterday.” The Assembly decreed, that it would persist in its resolutions: and furthermore, as the recent act of despotism, suggested to the King, sufficiently indicated that the Court would not stop there; that the personal freedom of the Deputies might be violated; and as reports of that nature had been already spread abroad, the National Assembly declared the person of each Deputy inviolable; that all such as should dare to make any attempt upon their liberty, were infamous, were traitors to their country, and guilty of a capital crime, and took upon itself to prosecute all those who should become the authors or performers of such commands.

M. Necker was the only one of the King’s ministers who was not present at the *séance royale*, either because he foresaw the fatal consequences which would attend it, or was informed of the measures undertaken to enforce it. It was thought that he would retire from the ministry, as he had, the evening before, given in his resignation. A considerable number of the Deputies

ties of the Commons had waited on him at his house, in order to persuade him to remain in office, when he was sent for by the Queen, and the King obtained a promise from him, that he would not quit his station. The citizens, who had followed the King, after the *séance royale*, and such as were induced by an unquiet curiosity, poured into the courts of the castle, into the galleries, into the apartments ; they were agitated by fear and by despair ; every quarter re-echoed with their murmurs. But a general joy succeeded, when they learnt, from the mouth of M. Necker himself, that he was not to retire from the ministry.

Such, then, was the effect of the *séance royale*, so opposite to what the enemies of the public welfare had expected, that M. Necker became only the more dear to the people, and the Deputies themselves were still more closely connected with him. So little effect did it produce upon the majority of the Clergy, that they repaired on the following day to the National Assembly, where business was transacted with as much tranquillity, as if there never had been a *séance royale*. On the 25th, the minority of the Nobles came to join them, and the names of the forty-seven generous members, amongst whom was the Duke of Orleans, became precious to the nation. *How I lament their condition !* said a courtier, very seriously ;

riously ; forty-seven families are now dishonoured : henceforth none will vouchsafe to be allied to them.

The minority of the Clergy still remained in their chamber, where they entered upon some useless deliberations ; the majority of the Nobles likewise deliberated in their own chamber : but these fractions of power vanished before the majesty of the National Assembly ; that grand luminary eclipsed all the rest ; it became a center of union to the nation. Every thing, therefore, called for a consolidation, now become indispensable, since the authority of despotism had shrunk back from the unshakeable firmness of a handful of free citizens. The King wrote to the presidents of the Nobility and of the Clergy, requesting these two orders to repair to the Assembly of the States-General, for the purpose of discussing freely his declaration of the twenty-third. The Clergy obeyed without hesitation ; but the Nobles were viewing with indignation a proposal, whereby they were to lose all the fruits of their opposition, when their president read to them some extracts of a letter from the Count d'Artois. By these they were given to understand, that their junction with the Assembly was become a matter of necessity, as the life of the King was in danger. To this assertion the Nobles gave credit, or pretended to give credit : every objection was over-ruled by this motive ;

motive; and the two orders repaired to the common hall, on the 27th of June, four days subsequent to the *réunion royale*, which had imperiously prohibited this very consolidation.

At the news of this event, the inhabitants of Versailles, who, for several days, had suffered so cruel an agitation, ran to the castle from all quarters of the city. The guards, in astonishment, were preparing to shut the gates, when the shout of *Vive le Roi* sufficiently proclaimed, that it was joy which had occasioned such a concourse. The citizens pour onward like waves succeeding waves, and the whole city is attracted, by this grand enthusiasm, into the capacious courts of the mansion of Louis XVI. They call for the King and Queen. The royal pair present themselves at the balcony, receive the blessings of the multitude, which then hurries to the house of M. Necker, to that of M. de Montmorin, to that of M. d'Orleans, to that of M. Baillie. In the evening the city was illuminated, and the night was spent in rejoicings.

Nevertheless, the union of the orders produced no other effect, than to exasperate, still farther, those who had resolved to subvert every thing, sooner than witness the continuation of the States-General. They perceived that their reign was on the point of expiring, in order to make room for the authority of law, and that the source of depre-

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dations and abuses was, ere long, to be dried up. Rage and madness united, suggested to them the most atrocious project of dissolving the National Assembly at the price of all the blood which such iniquity might cost. Paris gave them some embarrassment ; Paris, that immense capital, which is not a city, but a nation. For a whole week, the agitation was extreme. The Palais-Royal became the rendezvous of such, amongst the citizens, as took a lively interest in what related to the public ; day or night, it was never empty. Every hour, every moment, they received intelligence from Versailles, both of the danger which had threatened the Deputies, and of their success, and of their apprehensions as to the future. Famine also was beginning to shew her face in the metropolis ; the bread there, as well as at Versailles, was found to be of a bad quality. Amidst this universal anguish, the citizens are apprized that troops are arriving from every quarter ; that they are environing Paris and Versailles ; and that, stationed round these two cities, they are, in a great measure, blockading them. The foreign troops, in particular, are summoned to this service ; artillery is brought from the frontiers at a great expence ; preparations are made for forming a camp ; and the most renowned general in the kingdom, Mareschal de Broglie, is appointed to command

the army destined to fight, or rather to massacre the French, should they dare to make any opposition.

Paris, unprovided with subsistence, is on the point of being reduced by famine, and subjugated by the sword; the movements, unavoidable in the execution of such a design, increase, still further, the apprehensions of the citizens. At Versailles, some German troops, some hussars, and some companies of the artillery, seem collected for the purpose of dispersing the States-General, or of repulsing all who should attempt to defend the place where they are assembled. At length the conspirators, considering their success as certain, vaunted openly of their intentions; and not doubting that a populace, which they held in contempt, would be easily crushed by general officers, and by an army of fifty thousand men, they permitted a report to be circulated, that the National Assembly was to be immediately dissolved, and that several rebellious Deputies were to be punished with all the rigour of the law.

In consequence of these movements, and of these reports, the whole capital entertained but one sentiment; and it was not an ignorant and tumultuous rabble, which was affected with this sentiment, but every enlightened or brave man, of all ages, and of all conditions, whom that celebrated

city

city then contained within her ramparts. The common danger had united all. The women, who, in popular commotions, always display most intrepidity, encouraged the citizens to the defence of their country. The latter, by that instinct which public danger and the loftiness of patriotism inspired, ask the soldiers, when they meet any, whether they will have the courage to massacre their brethren, their fellow-citizens, their parents, their friends? The French guards, those generous citizens, rebels to their masters, in the language of despotism, but faithful to the nation, are the first to swear never to turn their arms against her. Their example is followed by some of the other troops. These patriots are loaded with caresses and with presents. The very soldiers, who had been marched to Paris, for the oppression of that capital, and, consequently, of the whole kingdom, are seen walking the streets arm in arm with the citizens. They repair in crowds to the Palais-Royal, where every one is eager to present them with refreshments; and each employs every method, which he deems calculated to disgust the soldiers with arbitrary government, and to attach them to the common cause. Meanwhile, information is given, that some of the military are going to receive punishment, for having refused to fire upon their fellow-citizens; that eleven of the French guards are

detained prisoners at the Abbey, and are shortly to be committed to the Bicêtre, a prison where the vilest criminals are confined. Their cause becomes the cause of the public. A party hastens to their deliverance ; the crowd increases on the way ; the prisons are forced open ; the insurgents enter ; the soldiers are set at liberty, and are led back in triumph to the Palais-Royal, which becomes their asylum and sanctuary. The hussars and dragoons, who had received orders to attack the multitude, lay down their arms, and join their fellow-citizens ; and on every side is heard the cry of *Vive la Nation !* for, since the Commons had formed themselves into a National Assembly, that was become the shout of joy, and men no longer cried, *Vive le Tiers-Etat.* At length a deputation is sent to the National Assembly, for the purpose of desiring its intercession with the King ; and the Assembly, after requesting the citizens to re-establish peace and order, recommends the soldiers to the mercy of the monarch. The soldiers returned to prison ; the King granted them a pardon, and every thing wore the appearance of tranquillity.

Nevertheless, the minds of men were very far from enjoying tranquillity ; the preparations for destruction were increasing every day. The National Assembly was made acquainted with the inquietude of the citizens of Paris and Versailles,

and

and each member received private advices, which afforded just grounds for apprehension. The life-guards were every moment on horseback ; the Swiss guards were stationed round the castle ; some German troops were posted in that part of the castle of Versailles, called the Orangery, and it was well known that the artillery-men had received orders to hold themselves in readiness ; it was not yet known at Court, that they had declared against firing either upon the Assembly or upon the citizens. In the environs of Paris were the foreign regiments of Royal-Cravate, Royal-Pologne, Helmstatt, the Swiss regiments of Diesback, Salis-made, and Châteauvieux, the hussars of Bercheny, Esterhazy, the Royal Dragoons, the regiments of Provence and of Vintimille, with those of Besançon and le Fere. Other troops were at hand to reinforce them. The National Assembly found it impossible to remain silent, particularly at a time when, notwithstanding its remonstrances, the citizens were prevented from entering the galleries of that hall, where the soldiers should have received no orders except those of the Assembly. Accordingly, an address was presented to the King, beseeching him to withdraw the troops, who at once alarmed the citizens, and violated the freedom of the national representatives. An answer was suggested to

the monarch, which contained a refusal seasoned with a sort of cruel raillery. It observed, that the motive for assembling the troops was, to provide for the safety of Paris, and to protect the freedom of the representatives : but that, if they took umbrage at that, the King could, if they thought proper, remove the Assembly to Noyon or to Soissons, and that he himself would repair to Compiegne. This was proposing to the Assembly to incur still greater danger, by placing itself between the army of Paris and the troops of Flanders and Alsace : it was telling the Assembly that it might depart, if it thought fit, but that the troops should not stir from their quarters. In vain did Mirabeau represent to the Assembly, that the King's answer was a refusal, which called for new and more pressing applications ; that the Deputies had not desired to depart, but that the troops should be withdrawn, and that to trust themselves to the ministers and advisers of the King, was to deliver themselves up to their enemies.* The confidence which the Assembly placed in the virtue of the King, prevailed over all other considerations, and no farther application was made to him.

* See the Address to the King, the King's Answer, and Mirabeau's Speech upon that Answer, in the first volume of the Translation already so often referred to. In referring to that translation, I consider myself as always addressing the English reader.

It was on the 11th of July that the King had returned the answer above-mentioned ; and, on the 12th, the first blow was given, by the dismissal of M. Necker, who received orders to keep that circumstance a secret, and to quit the kingdom in twenty-four hours. He set out that very evening ; and, although he meant to retire to Copet, he took the road to Brussels, the better to disguise the motive of his departure. Thus fled into exile the man whose resignation the King, only three weeks before, had refused to accept, and whom himself and his royal consort had prevailed on to continue in the ministry. He fled, carrying away with him the confidence of the nation.

The next day this event was divulged at Versailles, and also that M. M. de Breteuil, Foulon, la Galésiere, la Porte, and the Mareschal de Broglie, were to compose the King's council. At this intelligence every eye was cast down, and every person expected that the blow would be struck, with which, for some days past, they had been indirectly menaced. The Assembly was not to have met on that day, and the sense of their common danger having, nevertheless, collected a certain number of the Deputies, they were of opinion that they could not debate. But it is not possible to describe the prodigious commotion which, on a sudden, was excited

through the whole city of Paris. The inhabitants foresaw every thing which they had to expect ; the National Assembly dissolved by force, and the capital invaded by an enemy. The citizens hurried to the Palais-Royal, their accustomed place of rendezvous ; consternation had led them thither ; the universal rage was kindled there, but kindled so effectually, that it was communicated in a moment to every part of that vast metropolis. The first victim of despotism became the idol and divinity of the day. The citizens procure a bust of M. Necker ; they accompany it with that of M. d'Orleans, whose banishment was said to be likewise determined on, and march with them through Paris, attended by an immense multitude. Some soldiers of the Royal Allemand, who had received orders to attack, strike with their sabres, those busts, which were insensible of the indignity. Several persons are wounded. The Prince de Lambesc is in the *place de Louis XV.* with the soldiers of the Royal Allemand ; the populace flings stones at him ; upon this, he throws himself into the Thuilleries, sabre in hand, and wounds an old man who is walking there. While the women and children, terrified at these acts, rend the air with shrieks and lamentations, the great guns are fired, and all Paris cries to

arms ;

arms ; the alarm-bell is rung ; the citizens rush into the workshops of the armourers.

They attack a company of the Royal Allemand, and the tumult continues till night, when some banditti, who had been posted at a short distance from Paris, set fire to the barriers, enter the city, and scour the streets, which, fortunately, are filled by patroles of the citizens, of the French Guards, and of the soldiers on the watch-duty. On a sudden, a happy thought entered the head of some good citizen ; it became a treasure of light, and was the means of saving Paris. Paris contained two hundred thousand hands, ready to arm for her defence, but officers were wanted to command them. At the summons of a generous citizen, the electors are convened ; at the peril of their lives they courageously assume authority, and the citizens obey them with confidence.

During this day of mourning and consternation, the conspirators gave a loose to the emotions of a guilty joy. At Versailles, in that Orangery, where were lodged, or, to speak more properly, disposed in ambuscade, the German troops of Nassau, princes, princesses, favourites, male and female, were entertaining themselves with the music of the martial instruments. They were loading the soldiers with caresses and with presents ; and the latter, amidst their brutal orgies,

orgies, were pleasing themselves with the thought of dispersing the National Assembly, and of subjugating the kingdom. Calamitous night, when the courtiers were dancing to that foreign music, and enjoying the idea of the massacre !

The dawn of the ensuing day had no sooner made its appearance, than the citizens of Paris pursued, with activity, the plan which they had formed on the preceding night. Some banditti had plundered the house of St. Lazare : they are driven from that quarter ; the alarm is rung ; each citizen repairs to his district, in order to be enrolled ; all the muskets are taken from the gunsmiths ; swords, sabres, battle-axes, pikes, weapons of every kind, are forged with expedition ; the armory is burst open, and every one carries away some of the old instruments of war, which had been long laid up there : thirty thousand muskets, which were concealed in the Hôtel des Invalides, and six pieces of cannon, are seized on ; and, on the following day, sixty thousand men were armed, enrolled, distributed in companies, while the electors, with unwearyed diligence, took care that the supplies of provisions should suffer no interruption.

At the same time, the National Assembly sent notice to the King of the danger which the State incurred, unless the troops should be withdrawn from the capital ; and the Deputies offered to repair

pair to Paris, and to throw themselves between the citizens and the soldiery : but the King answered, that he alone was a proper judge of the necessity for the troops ; that he would make no alteration in his measures ; and that the proposal of the Deputies, to go to Paris, was nugatory, as their presence there could answer no good purpose whatever. Upon this the Assembly decreed, that M. Necker and the other ministers, who had been just sent into exile, carried with them its esteem and its regret ; that it would still insist upon the dismission of the soldiery, and upon the establishment of a city militia ; and declared, that no intermediate power could exist between the Assembly and the King. In the next place, it rendered the ministers for the time being responsible for the issue of every undertaking, and threatened with impeachment any person whatsoever, who should dare to make use of the infamous term *Bankruptcy*. Lastly, it came to the resolution of continuing to sit all night.

So much courage and prudence united, on the part of the people and its representatives, proved, however, insufficient to determine the Court to renounce its projects. The King's refusal, which had afflicted the National Assembly, produced, in Paris, the last efforts of despair. The inhabitants believed that their enemies had devoted them to destruction, and they resolved either

either to conquer or perish. Then came forth, from amidst that agitated throng, some of those men of intrepidity, who are almost never wanting upon great occasions, and who naturally assume the situation which is due to them. One or more voices are heard exclaiming, that there would be neither peace nor liberty as long as the Bastille was in being. A thousand voices repeat this declaration ; and nothing now is heard but the cry of " Let us take the Bastille." Launay, who commanded in that stronghold of terror, had long since prepared for its defence, and had just received orders from Besenval to hold out until succours should be sent to him. But was it possible for him to resist the impetuosity of Frenchmen, and the undaunted fury of half Paris, that was rushing upon the fortress ? The besiegers summon him to surrender. He affects to listen to terms ; some of the citizens are admitted into the court, and are immediately detained prisoners. Upon this, the rage of those without is exasperated to the utmost ; and ere long, by prodigies of valour, such of the assailants, as are nearest to the fort, cut the chains of the drawbridge asunder, and, in the course of a few hours, take possession of a place, which an army, headed by the great Condé, had in vain besieged for three and twenty days. The annals of the nation have consecrated their names to immortality,

under

under the general appellation of *Conquerors of the Bastille*. Launay, now a prisoner, is conducted to the Hôtel de Ville, through a tide of enraged citizens ; his conductors displaying as much courage in protecting him, as they had already displayed in possessing themselves of his castle ; but, after an hour spent in marching and resisting, Launay was butchered at the foot of the staircase of the Hôtel de Ville, when he was just on the point of being in safety. Discovery is made, at the same time, that M. de Flesselle, the Provost of Paris, had held a secret correspondence with Launay ; he is reproached with this conduct in the Hôtel de Ville ; he makes his escape ; but, at the end of the *Place de Greve*, he receives a pistol-shot, his head is severed from his body, and this bloody head, together with that of Launay, is borne aloft upon a pike through the streets of the metropolis.

Meanwhile night approaches ; and a report having been spread, that the troops were to enter the town by the barrier called *Enfer*, the alarm-bell is rung ; each snatches up his arms, and hurries to his quarters ; some drag the artillery, others hasten to the barrier, where several cannon-shots are fired ; the houses are all illuminated ; the pavement is torn up, in order that the stones may be carried into the apartments, and the women prepare to hurl them down upon the sol-

diery. So much courage and activity once again saved the citizens.

At Versailles the Court would not believe that the Bastille was taken; for at all times that fortress had been deemed impregnable. But the National Assembly stamped a character of importance on these circumstances, by appointing a committee, which was charged to prepare a plan of constitution for the people, at the very time when the Court was occupied in reducing it under the yoke. The Assembly, however, sent two messages to the King, and twice the King returned a vague answer, without consenting to dismiss the troops. Whereupon the Assembly resolves to sit up a second night, and never to quit the hall till its requisition should be granted. This night, so distressing for men upon whose persons all the confidence and all the hope of their country rested, they spent in a state of quietude as great as that of the former; less affected with their own danger, than with the sense of the calamities to which France would become a prey, were the least misfortune to befall themselves. While the greater part of the Deputies were seeking, upon benches, upon tables, upon carpets, that sleep which nature required, and which refused to close their eyes, M. de Liancour, one of the members, proved the saviour of the state: he was grand-master of the wardrobe, was esteemed

esteemed by the King, and by all persons of real worth, and had at heart the welfare of his country. He repaired to the King during the night, when the latter was no longer beset by his perfidious counsellors ; he represented the situation of France, and the dangers which the King himself and the royal family would incur, if he did not change the unhappy measures which had been suggested to him. All that Louis XVI. requires, is to have counsellors who are worthy of his heart, that heart naturally inclined to benevolence. *Monsieur*, the King's brother, seconded the advice of M. de Liancour ; and, on the following day, the King went to the National Assembly, without pomp, and without a train of attendants, at the moment when a fresh deputation was on the point of being sent up to him. The people, which was at his heels, maintained that melancholy silence, from which our kings have ever derived important lessons. The Assembly assumed the same deportment ; but when the King had declared, that it was his wish to preserve a good understanding with the nation, that he put his trust in her representatives, that he had given orders that the troops should remove from Paris and Versailles, and that he would open a free communication between the Assembly and himself, the hearts of all were relieved from the oppression which they had long suffered.

suffered. The King withdrew, accompanied by all the Deputies, who attended him to the castle, amidst acclamations and universal joy.

The National Assembly appointed a deputation, for the purpose of conveying this glad intelligence to Paris, while its own cares were still directed to the removal of the new ministry. Paris, meanwhile, impatient to confirm that liberty which she was beginning to enjoy, had made choice of M. Baillie for Mayor, and of M. de la Fayette for Commander in Chief of the National Guards. These two new dignities could not be more properly conferred, than upon the man who had presided so gloriously in the National Assembly, at a crisis of such difficulty and danger, and upon the celebrated friend of Washington. The Deputies, on their arrival at Paris, beheld, with astonishment and with incessant delight, the most glorious spectacle which can be exhibited to men impassioned with the love of liberty, and who glow with impatience to present her to their country.

That Paris, so lately the theatre where bloody scenes were acted, and which, but two days before, expected to be stormed and pillaged, now gave a loose to transports of the most lively exultation. The streets crowded with citizens, and the windows with spectators, to see the Deputies pass by, the flowers which are strewn before

fore them, the blessings which are showered on them, the tender names of saviours, of fathers of their country, which are re-echoed to their ears, the mothers presenting their children to them, and then clasping them in their own arms, the tumultuous and reiterated applause, the enthusiasm of those citizens already become free, the overflowings of their hearts carried to an amiable intoxication,* and, amidst these darling objects, the terrible array of one hundred thousand men in arms,† whose warlike voices were shouting *Vive le Roi! Vive la Nation!* formed a sight which consoled the Deputies for the solicitude which had so long distressed them. The Hôtel de Ville, the Cathedral, witnessed new and affecting scenes, and the patriots returned to present a picture of them to the National Assembly.

One addition to this happiness was wanting, and that was, the recall of M. Necker. The new ministers had voluntarily resigned. The King restored M. Necker to the wishes of the citizens. Information of this was sent to the Assembly; and the King at the same time declared, that he would return, on the day following, to Paris. The National Assembly dispatched thither a second deputation, which that city had already re-

* L'ivresse et la cordialité de leur épanchements.

† “The armed majesty of the people,” as *Grattan* expressed himself on a similar occasion.

quested, in order to calm some new disgusts which had arisen there.

No city in the world can afford a spectacle like that of Paris, when agitated by any grand passion, since in no other city is the communication so prompt, nor the minds of men so active. Paris contains within her boundaries citizens from every province, and, of this mixture of various characters, is formed the character of the nation, which is distinguished by an astonishing impetuosity. The desire of the citizens is complied with. At two o'clock in the morning the deputation from the Assembly arrived at Paris; and, at seven, a line of one hundred and fifty thousand men, three or four a-breast, was formed from Passy to the Hôtel de Ville. This military multitude * was waiting for the King. In vain did the royal family endeavour to hinder his departure, and to inspire him with apprehensions: he continued immovable; for he trusted to his people and his conscience. He knew full well, and we knew it likewise, that he had not been the author of those pernicious counsels, which had kindled the civil war. The King, plainly dressed, and in a carriage not magnificent, entered Paris with that confidence which is natural to him: the Deputies accompanied him on foot. But the spectacle was far different from what had

* *Multitude enrégimentée.*

been

been exhibited the evening of the day preceding: it was not that delicious extravagance of hearts which are overflowing with joy. The recollection of the past, the uncertainty as to the future, the oppressive sensation of a real and concealed calamity, restrained them, as it were, with one consent, from uttering expressions of gladness which could not be sincere. Nothing was heard but the cry of *Vive la Nation!* this cry was as an oracle of public will, of public will * requiring that the nation should be free and happy. The King, however, who had been struck with the most imposing sight which can be presented to the ruler of such a multitude, was affected, at the Hôtel de Ville, by the eloquent discourses that were addressed to him by the Mayor, by the President of the electors, and by M. de Lally Tolendal. "My people, said he, in a tone expressive of his emotion, my people may always rely upon my love." He took the national cockade from the hands of the Mayor, and appeared at the window of the Hôtel de Ville, wearing the symbol of the alliance which he had contracted with his people. Then it was that that people, inspired with confidence, and which had only wait-

* I apprehend, that there is often more grace, as well as greater energy, in repeating the substantive, and even the substantive and adjective, than in relying upon the vague and feeble aid of the pronoun relative. We have the elegant authority of *Cæsar* for this practice.

ed for some proof of the King's affection, gave a loose to the most animated effusions of joy; the repeated shout of *Vive le Roi* resounded far and wide; the artillery announced the happy moment so much wished for; and the King, returning to Versailles, beheld nothing but demonstrations of joy, of joy which rose even to a delirium: so little does it cost kings to acquire the affections of the people.

In this manner was frustrated one of the most horrible conspiracies ever devised against any nation. The consequences of these events were to be proportioned to their greatness. We have seen, in the course of this brief history, that, for several years past, the Court, of which the whole kingdom was weary, and which, nevertheless, was unwilling that abuses should be reformed, had been struggling disadvantageously against the opinion of the public. It is one of the evils attending on royalty, that the Court always shelters itself under the sanction of the King's name; this name it opposed as a buckler to all the weapons which were launched at it, and it then employed the royal hand to hurl them back upon its adversaries. The Court persuaded the Monarch, that whatever was said and done against itself, was likewise said and done against him. And thus a prince, whose manners were naturally simple and correct, who took no delight in pomp, whose wants were limited,

limited, and who had no other wish than to see his people happy, was yet compelled to lend his name to a multitude of iniquities. Meanwhile, his counsellors were ever urging him to some extravagant act of power, which he as constantly was obliged to relinquish ; they incessantly led him to the charge against their adversary, public opinion, and that too with all the might of despotism, and incessantly was he forced to retire before that unconquerable phalanx, which was still advancing upon him. The world justified the King, but was incensed against the royalty ; and the Court, lessening the respect which was usually paid the throne, suffered liberty to gain all that despotism was losing.

They who, in order to support their interest, attached themselves to the Court, were necessarily involved in the same ruin. The dignified clergy could no longer make resistance ; and, although the Court found, in the counsels of that interested body, some of those veteran expedients which are familiar to the church, such an alliance served only to destroy them both, by reason of the well-known similarity of their manners. The Court-nobility drew along with it the nobles of the provinces, by whom before it had been hated and despised. The Court-nobles soon succeeded in persuading their brethren of the provinces, that it behoved them to form a common league for the

protection of authority: and, from this war of all the upper orders against the Third Estate, the latter became convinced, that, unless it were every thing, it was likely to be nothing. As for the rest of those who patronised abuses, they were not yet become members of the league, but they were preparing for it, from a foreboding of what it was possible they might lose; and thus the kingdom was divided into two avowed parties, that of the Court, and that of the People. Hence the appellation of *Aristocrate* and *Democrate*, of *Royalist* and *Patriot*.

Meanwhile, this last victory of the People over the Court occasioned a grand convulsion through the kingdom, like those eruptions of Vesuvius, which produce prodigious shocks at a great distance from that mountain. All those who, at Court, dreaded popular retribution, or impeachments on account of the conspiracy, took to flight under divers-disguises. The ministers disappeared. M. Foulon caused it to be reported that he was dead. Madame de Polignac and her family took the road to Basle, where accidentally they met M. Necker. The Mareschal de Broglie secured himself at Luxembourgh, and the chief officers of his army were employed in looking about for asyla. At length the Prince de Condé and the Count d'Artois fled also in their turn, and carried into foreign countries their hatred against their

their own, and that inveterate rage which time is every day augmenting. M. de Calonne, whom hatred to M. Necker, and fury against France, which, it was said, he was again to govern, had attracted back to Paris, now turned about for Brussels, where the last and long-continued error of the princes was their having had recourse to his counsels. It was still the Court of France ; but its conspiracies were no longer within the realm, and the people obtained a momentary respite. The Queen and *Monsieur* were the only persons who staid behind ; the one determined to persevere, and the other to look on and wait the issue.

Meanwhile the exasperated people, that people which, on a sudden, and in consequence of so many successive blunders, overleaped, in a single day, the perilous barrier between slavery and liberty, took vengeance on the nobles for a grand conspiracy, into which it had every reason to suspect that all the members of the aristocracy had entered. We have already said, and it is the key to all these circumstances, that this was a war between privilege and public good. M. Foulon was apprehended, conveyed to Paris, and sacrificed by the enraged people, notwithstanding the exertions of M. de la Fayette, of the new Mayor, of the committee, who with difficulty held the reins of that authority which had been entrusted to them ; his head, livid and defiled with gore, was

carried through the streets of the metropolis. M. Berthier, his son-in-law, Intendant of Paris, is seized at Compéigne, conducted to the capital on the very evening of the barbarous execution of Foulon, and butchered in the same manner. A ferocious populace * falls furiously on the body of the dead victim ; a barbarian tears out the heart, which he fixes upon his hanger, and the head is borne aloft along with that of Foulon. Undoubtedly these two sufferers had much to be reproached with ; but their crimes against the people were committed at a time when the orders of the Court justified every proceeding. It was, indeed, a lamentable crisis, when the people, despairing of justice, considered itself authorised to do justice for itself. Paris would have become uninhabitable, had these horrors been continued.

At the same time, and in imitation of the capital, all the citizens of the empire take up arms for their security ; they form themselves into companies, into battalions, into regiments. A report is spread throughout the kingdom at one and the same moment, that the fugitive princes meditate an invasion ; in addition to this, it is said, that some thousands of banditti are on their march, that they are actually on the spot, that there is no time to be lost, but that all must prepare to de-

* *People* in the original ; but the appellation is too good for such savages.

fend themselves immediately; that couriers, whom none, however, could see, have just arrived with the intelligence. The most indolent are spurred on by this well-invented panic,* and, in a week, three millions of men assume the military character, and the three-coloured cockade becomes the ornament of every head. The old municipalities, almost every where suspected, are every where cashiered, to make room for committees who have the direction of public business, and a sort of order is established in every place, amidst fears, hopes, the intoxication of liberty, the destruction of powers, and a whole people which is agitated with the expectation of a better state. In the rural parts of the kingdom, the popular rage is vented upon the *Seigneurs*; castles are burned down, family records destroyed, and private vengeance intermingles with the vengeance of the public. It was the continuation of that universal rising of the third estate, which estate was then combating against tyranny and privileges united, and which had no other instrument to employ, than what was naturally in its hands, the irresistible instrument of force. The Court made those whom it had summoned to its assistance, pay dearly for the dire services which it had seemed inclined to render them.

* *Par la terreur panique.*

Meanwhile,

Meanwhile, and from the moment when the King had restored to every mind, if not hope, at least a degree of tranquillity, the National Assembly was occupied in framing the Constitution, and had appointed committees for the purpose of distributing the different tasks. At the same time it caused a proclamation to be made, in order to calm the minds of men, and to arrest the effects of an impetuous vengeance, the consequences of which it was impossible to compute. The Assembly also received the solemn vows of fidelity from the whole French nation, the homage of the several corporations, and even of the sovereign courts, which at length recognized, in the loud and awful voice of the public,* the authority of the national representatives. It made use of this authority to allay the troubles which had arisen in various places, and to put a stop to the arbitrary seizure of such persons as the citizens suspected of being hostile to their liberty. It issued orders for the free circulation of provisions, which was obstructed in certain quarters, by the malevolence of the one party, and by the ignorance of the other.

It was in the midst of this prodigious agitation, that M. Necker traversed France, and revisited the capital. He received, every where, the loudest proofs of the universal exultation. The people

* Aux éclats de la voix publique.

viewed,

viewed, in him, the indispensable minister, and the martyr of the public cause, to which cause the Court itself had, by its own impolicy, attached him. The grandest triumphs of M. Necker have been constantly prepared for him by his enemies. Paris received him with the wildest excess of joy: he obtained, from the enthusiastic electors, a general amnesty for all those who were suspected of having conspired against the people. But their powers extended not so far: they were disclaimed, and obliged to explain the purport of their decree. In fact, it was dangerous, that a few citizens of Paris should assume the power of arresting the prosecutions against those who were guilty of being traitors to the nation. The National Assembly ordered M. Besenval into custody, who had been the principal cause of the step taken by M. Necker, and who was afterwards set at liberty, there being no evidence against him.

The general ferment was now risen to the utmost. The people, astonished at seeing its chains broken with such facility, and at feeling its own strength, abused that strength in taking vengeance on its oppressors, and its new liberty was, as yet, but licentiousness. General hatred in its blind rage sought every where to punish enemies, pointed out to it by chance or by prejudice. A never-ceasing inquietude tormented those freemen born of yesterday; in their necessity for a new order

der of things, and for a sovereign jurisdiction, they seized and engrossed all jurisdiction to themselves ; and several tumultuous assasinations were the fruit of this delirium. The burthen of so many oppressive prerogatives, of so many imposts wherewith the peasantry was overloaded, and to be relieved from which they had repeatedly petitioned, appeared to them at this time so intolerably grievous, that they were determined to shake it off altogether. The National Assembly contained within itself, from the first day of its session, the seeds of those two parties which divided the whole kingdom ; and the explosion of these two opposite aversions had augmented the violence of them both. One sentiment, however, predominated there, and that was, the dread of the effects which anarchy, too long continued, might occasion.

The Assembly agitated the question of the famous declaration of rights, a declaration which henceforward we must leave to justify itself : but the disturbances in the provinces obliged the Deputies to suspend that important question, in order to publish a decree, enjoining all the citizens to demean themselves peaceably, to pay such taxes and duties as were not yet suppressed, and to yield obedience to the laws. While the representatives were thus occupied, M. de Noailles rose and requested their attention. He represented, that

that the decrees of the Assembly against those popular insurrections would prove ineffectual, unless it destroyed the cause; that this cause was to be discovered in the oppressive taxes which the people paid; and that the remedy was, to relieve the people from that burthen; to decree, that all imposts should be equitably laid on, that the feudal rights should be redeemable, and that personal servitude should be abolished without purchase. This proposition was seconded by another member of the nobility; that member was M. d'Aiguillon: he observed, that, before they gave to France a constitution, they must confer some favours on her, and justify the zeal of the Assembly, by certain splendid sacrifices, which, doubtless, all the nobles would be emulous to imitate. This gave occasion to that memorable scene of the 4th of August, where, in one single night, all the privileges, all the oppressive powers, experienced an utter abolition; a scene so ill judged of by those who did not observe, that these sacrifices were either enjoined by the instructions to the Deputies, or were manifestly necessary to the executing the plan of a new constitution. No less splendid was the spectacle of the nobles and the clergy, while sacrificing the rights of chace, of fishing, of warren, and of dove-houses; of the parish priests making a sacrifice of their perquisites; of the beneficiaries declaring that they would confine them-
selv^e.

selves to one benefice ;* of lords of seigneuries acknowledging the necessity for the redemption of feudal rights, which were a grievance to the peasantry ; above all, in this universal enthusiasm, it was a grand and affecting hope for the regeneration of the empire, to see the deputies of the *pays d'état* and those of several privileged towns, advancing in succession, and with a patriotic eagerness, to offer up the sacrifice of their antique rights and charters, covering the steps of the *bureau*, and proclaiming their desire, that there should be no more provinces, that there should be but one sole nation, one sole family, one sole empire.

It seemed as if France was near being regenerated in the course of a single night ; so true it is, that the happiness of a people is easily to be accomplished, when those who govern are less occupied with themselves than with the people. The Assembly, astonished at the spectacle which was exhibiting to itself, and affected with the idea of the benefits which it had just showered upon the nation, decreed that a medal should be struck, in order to preserve the memory of that great and glorious night. It conferred upon the King the title of *Restorer of the Liberty of France*, decreed that a deputation should present him with her ho-

* I wish devoutly, that our beneficiaries would present us with such another spectacle.

image, and beseech him to assist at a solemn *Te Deum*.*

The National Assembly seemed to have made reparation, in a single day, for the delays to which the dreadful crisis of affairs had given occasion. But all this time the state was reduced to a second crisis, by the want of money, and by the confusion which reigned throughout the kingdom. M. Necker proposed to the Assembly a loan of thirty millions at five *per cent.* without security. The Assembly, in neglecting to provide a security for this loan, in neglecting to fix any term for the repayment, and in reducing the interest to four and a half *per cent.* presumed too far upon the national credit, and upon the patriotism of the opulent. The loan fell to the ground. It is not clear that it would have succeeded in the form proposed by M. Necker; but the blame lay upon the Assembly, and M. Necker did not scruple to say so. Accordingly, when that minister proposed, afterwards, a new loan of eighty millions, which produced an aid of only forty, the Assembly voted it without hesitation; but the loan did not answer the desired end, and the reproach still belongs to the National Assembly.

The sacrifices of the 4th of August, made so eagerly by even the deputies of the nobility and of the clergy, met with a very ill reception from

* This last idea did not favour much of *Atheism*.

the nobles and the men of the church. In the provinces particularly, the feudal domination was by so much the more agreeable to most of those who exercised it, as they were but lately come into the possession of it, and as their nobility was a new purchase. It is in little towns, especially, that persons are the more desirous of having inferiors, because there they are nearer to their equals: this is one of the hundred thousand maladies of human nature.* The aristocratic party, therefore, naturally reinforced itself with all those who beheld with sorrow the equalization of conditions. On the other hand, the people rejoiced, without judgement or moderation, in this new order of things. In the midst of this great ferment, the burning of castles and court-rolls was continued; and, ere long, some banditti, taking advantage of these circumstances, spread themselves in detachments through several of the provinces, setting fire to property, without distinguishing to what party the proprietors belonged. The National Assembly ordered, that severe prosecutions should be commenced against the miscreants, and adopted various measures both forcible and prudent, for putting an end to these disturbances. Meanwhile, the decrees of the 4th of August were drawn up, the solemn act which abolished the feudal system was proclaimed;

* I like this last sentence.

and

and the clergy, which had yielded up its tithes to the nation, was promised a national recompence. This act was brought up to the King by the whole Assembly, which at the same time conferred upon him his new title of *Restorer of the Liberty of France*. The King accepted both, and invited the Deputies to attend him, *in order to return thanks to God, in his holy temple, for the generous sentiments which were actuating the National Assembly.*

BOOK THE FOURTH.

FRANCE might have been likened to an immense chaos, in which all the elements of order already existed, and were only waiting for the hand of the Creator. Power was suspended, authority disowned, and the wrecks of the feudal system were superadded to the vast ruins. Every thing tended to excite an apprehension, that the kingdom would become a prey to anarchy; and if such was the fear of all good citizens, it formed the hope of those who were never weary of hoping for the restoration of despotism. But a people, which hath grown old in the habitude of order, feels the want of it, and cannot long dispense with it. The proprietaries were all in arms, and this proved the salvation of France; for that class of men who had nothing to lose, and every thing to gain, in the confusion of revolutions, was restrained from assembling any where, through the fear of a repulse.* Arms became the passion of a people naturally inclined to war. The capital

con-

* An excellent lesson to persons of property in this kingdom. Much of the mischief committed during the riots amongst ourselves might have been prevented by due vigilance. The very first symptom of popular commotion, be

conferred on them a degree of lustre and importance, by the order and the beauty of her national militia; emulation spread far and wide, and France, ere long, beheld three millions of men, all clad in the uniform of the nation.— These became the protectors of property, and the true public force; and although, in several places, they have themselves proved the cause of partial disturbances; although, in some, they have been an instrument in the hands of the disaffected, for obstructing the progress of the revolution, yet the whole of the national guards formed such a vast mass of resistance, that to them is France indebted for her salvation. It was the nation which protected the nation, and this grand display of strength was also a grand display of wisdom.*

At the same time, zeal for the public welfare incited, in each municipality, certain persons to dedicate their time and their vigils to the maintenance of order and tranquillity in the towns and

the cause of it what it may, should be as an alarm-bell to every good citizen: for, on all such occasions, there start up myriads of persons, “ who have nothing to lose, and every “ thing to gain, and who, while destroying property, never “ inquire to what party the proprietor belongs.”—I am induced to think that this little history may prove useful to the people of England, in more than one point of view. It is a bitter reproach to legislation and police, that there should exist in a state a multitude, of which the government can give no account.

* *Bravo.*

in the country. These two powers united have been constantly and universally active, while the National Assembly was erecting the new edifice of the legislature. Each laboured to prop up the old house, until the new one should be finished.

The Assembly delivered, at least for some time, from the apprehension of those great commotions, by which attempts had been made to introduce a general anarchy, employed itself in framing the constitution. It decreed the declaration of rights, as, in the foundations of a building, are engraved the titles of the founder, and fixed the principles of the monarchy, according to the requisitions stated in the instructions of their constituents, and upon a plan adapted to a country which contains seven and twenty millions of inhabitants, upon a surface of six and twenty thousand square leagues. But when the Deputies came to discuss the share which the King should possess in the legislature, there arose a mighty conflict in the very bosom of the National Assembly. On one side were those who, from habit, had acquired a blind affection for the name of the King's person, be the monarch what he might, and those who are governed by custom, and think that whatever hath been is right, and those who were of opinion that the King is the sole legislator, and those, in fine, who hoped to recover, through the King, whatever

whatever they had lost by the people. On the other side stood those who, alarmed, or rather enraged, at the very shadow of despotism, saw no other safeguard for public liberty, than the permanence of the legislative body, employed in making laws, and presenting them to the monarch for his sanction.* Whereupon a grand schism ensued. The president, from his chair, saw, on his right hand and on his left, the two parties confronted, and this division extended throughout the kingdom.

It must necessarily happen, in a free and enlightened nation, that the public debates of the legislators become the subject of popular discussion without doors ; take away this liberty, and the people, instead of having representatives, would have masters. The following question was agitated in the Assembly : Whether it should be lawful for the King, by a single act of his will, to obstruct the enactment of a law presented to him by the legislative body, and whether such negative of the King should always continue in full force. This negative is expressed by the Latin word *veto*, which signifies, *I forbid*, and such is the usage of Poland.† All parties were

* See the celebrated Speech of *Mirabeau* on the *Royal Sanction*, in the first volume of the translation.

† It was originally borrowed from the tribunes of the Roman people, any of whom could, by pronouncing this word, put a stop to any legislative proceeding in the Senate.

agreed, as to the necessity for the King's sanction, but they differed as to the duration of his negative. The discussion lasted long enough for all the citizens of the empire, and particularly those of Paris, to pay attention to the subject. In this contest, as in every other of the like nature, men judged of the future by the present ; they figured to themselves the King obstructing, by a negative for which no motive was assigned, such measures as were of the highest utility to the people, in order to favour the intrigues of his Court, or the machinations of his ministers. And, as every one expected a grand regeneration, which it was the interest of the Court to prevent, it was imagined that, should the King possess the *veto*, he would arrest all the operations of the National Assembly, and that thus the regeneration would be impracticable.

M. Mounier well observed, in the name of the committee of constitution, that the proposed *veto* did not concern the National Assembly then existing, which, being a constituting body, would take care that the constitution should be accepted, and not sanctioned : but the alarm was looking forward to the future. It was perceived that, within a given time, the King could, at his pleasure, inflict a paralytic stroke upon the legislative body ; a stroke which would render it useless. Paris, Rennes, Dinan, rose vigorously against

against the royal *veto*, which they considered as a never-failing instrument of tyranny. But the Assembly having voted, that the *veto* of the King should remain in force no longer than during two legislatures, and that it should be suspensive only, the wisdom of this law was universally acknowledged. By a happy coincidence with these principles, the King himself had refused an absolute or indefinite *veto*; and his opinion was found to be the opinion of the Assembly.*

While the minds of men without doors were warmly interested by discussions, upon which the fate of all depended, the National Assembly proceeded to determine the permanency of the legislative body, and to debate the famous question of the two chambers. Previously to the convocation of the States-General, the numerous partisans of the English constitution had declared their opinion upon this point; the old suffrage of Montesquieu, and the more recent production of De Lolme, had given considerable weight to this opinion. That equilibrium of three powers which balance one another, and prevent the encroachment of any one of them upon the rest, became the object of admiration; but those who

* The King of England hath an absolute *veto*, and no inconvenience is found to result from it. Mirabeau fought obstinately against the *veto suspensive*; it appeared to him to contain the seeds of a domination still worse than that of unlimited royalty.

favoured the idea of an undivided Assembly, considered this equilibrium in the constitution of England no otherwise than as a treaty of peace between three existing powers, to each of which its portion had been allotted ; and, without denying that England had no cause to be discontented with this compact, they did not think that such a compact was adapted to our circumstances.

Add to this, that personal interests intermingled in these discussions, and every debate was a quarrel. The dignified clergy were inclined to the two chambers, in the hope of obtaining a distinguished place in the upper. A large party of the nobles was likewise for the two chambers ; but the question concerning the peerage presented itself to their minds, and from that moment they became divided : for the provincial nobility understood, that the whole order should freely appoint its representatives, while the nobles of the Court were secretly indulging the notion, that the dignity of the peerage ought to be appropriated to themselves : lastly, many of the gentry were apprehensive that, by some unforeseen measure, the upper chamber might be composed, for the most part, of those forty-seven of the minority, who had formed a voluntary coalition with the National Assembly. Such parish ministers as were not well affected to their bishops,

be-

betrayed an inclination for the unity of the Assembly. The majority of the Deputies of the Commons could see nothing in the upper chamber but a constitutional refuge for aristocracy, and the preservation of the feudal system : their distrust was corroborated by the continuance of that league, which hath ever since subsisted between the orders and the Court, and by the intrigues employed for the purpose of preventing the King from giving his royal sanction to the decrees of the 4th of August. From incertitude a sort of obscurity arose with respect to the upper chamber, an obscurity which lessened the number, or at least the warmth, of its partisans. None could form a clear conception of what such a chamber would be, nor of what he himself should be ; personal interests always enter into such calculations, and no political scheme is exempt from them.

Neither did any sufficiently comprehend the system of a senate for life, composed of persons taken from every class of citizens, and who might be too easily corrupted by the Court ; nor of a senate appointed for a stated time, and selected from the whole Assembly, of which, consequently, it would form only a fraction. To those who objected, that there would be no check upon an undivided assembly, for want of a proper counterpoise, it was answered, that ample means of

restraining it would be found within itself, by rendering delays in its deliberations a matter of necessity; that it would find its natural counterpoise in the *veto* of the King, who represented the negative will of the nation, as her Deputies represented the affirmative; that, should they abuse their power, by enacting decrees injurious to the nation, the King might make a merit with her of having saved her from their tyranny; that these two counter-weights were more advantageous to the people, than if three were formed out of them, two of which would naturally prove adverse to its interests. In fine, the Assembly decreed, by a majority of nine hundred and eleven voices against eighty-nine, that there should be no more than one chamber. It decreed, moreover, that the legislative body should be renewed every two years by elections, and this biennial period was denominated a *legislature*.

The precise meaning of the word *sanc*tion** was not yet determined, as an assembly which is numerous, and, especially, not unanimous, cannot be restricted to the peaceful meditation of the closet; we must not, however, conclude, with the partisans of despotism, that the laws ought to be the work of a single legislator. The National Assembly laboured under this dreadful disadvantage, which for a long time impeded its operations, namely, the establishing a monarchy while

while the monarch already existed. Hence its enemies, taking advantage of its declaration, that no law can be in force without the sanction of the King, drew an inference from the ideal king, whom the Assembly had in contemplation, to the real king whom they were desirous of opposing to it: whence they still further pretended, that the King had the power of quashing the daily ordinances of the Assembly, and, consequently, of obstructing the constitution. They would not take notice, that the National Assembly having been impowered to constitute the monarchy, according to certain rules, and to confer upon the monarch such and such authorities, the latter could not oppose his pre-existing authority to the national will ; that he was not to sanction, but to accept the constitution ; and that the law relative to the sanction had no other object in view, than the future state of things, when the constitution should be completed. The truth was, that the power of the King was suspended, while the representatives of the nation were framing a new constitution. But the Assembly never once durst proclaim this circumstance ; and, according to the expressions used by several of the members, it threw a veil of sacred mystery over this great, but dangerous truth.

Nevertheless, the imposing title of King, nay, even the successive sacrifices, which the constitution

tution seemed to extort from Louis XVI. grief at seeing legislation thus carried on without him, the prejudices of servile obedience, were all so many means employed to give obstruction to the further progres of the Assembly. Then arose the hypocritical lamentations of those, who affected to deplore the condition of the King: they displayed a tender attachment to him, which they thought he could not doubt, and which must have been suspected by him, had he observed that they were regretting less the loss of his authority, than of their own, and of his power, than of their privileges. Such a torrent of fictitious tears aimed at arresting the accep-tation of the decrees of the 4th of August. In fact, the King accepted no more than a certain number of them, and made some observations on the rest; but, in consequence of the representations of the Assembly, he accepted them all without exception, and unconditionally; and the Assembly promised to pay attention to the King's observations, as often as it should make laws which were derived from those principles.

These were the glorious times, when the National Assembly laid the foundations of a multitude of constitutional truths, which in France have so eminently improved the public mind, and which neither time nor revolutions will be able to destroy, as long as there shall be books

left

left amongst us. With a generous emulation, the citizens of the whole empire made offerings and sacrifices to their country ; and the archives of the kingdom record this heroic patriotism.* Some wives and daughters of artisans were the first to shew the example, in the midst of the National Assembly.

But these resources from the civic spirit † were far from proving adequate to the prodigious necessities of the state. In the general disorganization, the receipts were insufficient for the expences. M. Necker laid before the Assembly this calamitous situation of the finances, and the means proper for remedying the evil. He proposed, among other plans, to require of the citizens the patriotic contribution of one fourth of their revenues. The Assembly was frightened at the idea ; but Mirabeau, more eloquent than he had ever been, great in his gesture, in his countenance, and in his voice, prevailed on the Assembly to decree, with confidence, the measure proposed by M. Necker.‡ It was the opinion of the representatives, that they ought to prepare the nation for this act, by an address, which might encourage her to make

* En conservant le souvenir.

† Civisme.

‡ How admirably does this description of Mirabeau's *delivery* correspond with the style of his orations !—I have often been induced to think, that one might form an idea of an orator's action, merely from having read his speeches.

sacrifices

sacrifices so necessary for the protection of liberty, and for the salvation of the empire.

The Assembly then proceeded to the discussion of the constitutional articles, relative to the hereditary succession to the throne in the family which now reigns ; and, in this, all that it had to do, was to adhere to the instructions of its constituents. There arose, however, a question, both imprudent and useless, with respect to the renunciation of the branch of the House of Bourbon, now seated on the throne of Spain. The duke of Orleans, a member of the Assembly, was personally interested in this question. Obstinate debates ensued, between those who asserted that the King of Spain had rights to the crown of France, and those who maintained the contrary ; and the Assembly put an end to them, by declaring that it would not prejudge the affair of the renunciations. It left the decision of this question to futurity, to the national will, and, above all, to that cannon-law, which generally determines differences of this nature. The Assembly also decreed several constitutional articles, which, pursuant to the principles that I have now laid down, were to be absolutely accepted, and not sanctioned by the King. They were accordingly presented to him, along with the declaration of rights. But here again attempts were made to oppose the progress of the

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National Assembly, before it could raise the structure of the constitution any higher.

With respect to certain clouds that have enveloped the events, which I am going to relate with brevity, it is not possible to avoid declaring, that they were occasioned by the repeated error of the King's pretended friends. The constitutional articles, that declaration of rights were, in reality, the constitution; and every nation that desires to become free, may extract from it the principles of freedom. It was necessary, therefore, to keep the King aloof from this national law, while his counsellors were endeavouring to prevent its effect, by urging him to retard its acceptance. This was what had been proposed to be executed.

The liberty of the press, which the Assembly had virtually established, was employed against the Assembly itself. It is a matter of certainty, that, in the course of two years and upwards, there were daily published five or six productions against the National Assembly; from which circumstance it appears that they must have amounted to several thousands. The Assembly treated them with disdain; it permitted them to be sold at its doors, and even to be distributed within its walls. There also were renewed, on this occasion, all those feigned demonstrations of pity for the King, which were deemed

deemed likely to alienate the hearts of the citizens from the Assembly, which was the object of their affection. By representing him as a martyr exposed to a band of plunderers, they expected to secure an approbation of his flight, whensoever that flight should be effectuated. M. d'Estaing wrote to the Queen, acquainting her that it was already known, that a design had been formed by certain persons for carrying off the King, or for engaging him to withdraw, of his own accord, to Metz ; that a subscription was set on foot amongst the nobles and the clergy ; that M. de Bouillié was to lend his assistance ; that M. de Breteuil had the direction of the scheme ; that M. de Mercy was sent for ; that the Spanish ambassador had confessed to him, that a certain person of consequence and worthy of being credited, had told him, that a proposal had been made to him to sign the association :* he represented to the Queen the unhappy consequences of such a project, a project which would lead, at the least, to a civil war ; and he concluded with requesting an audience.

* Here occurs a confusion of *hims*, which translation cannot remedy, unless by resorting to the inelegant scrupulosity of Acts of Parliament, and other formal papers which are under the necessity of repeating, in a parenthesis, the substantive for which the pronoun stands proxy. Even the Greek and Roman languages, which, on the whole, are so well disciplined, are, nevertheless, not always perfect in the management of their pronouns.

It is not known what effect this letter produced upon the mind of the Queen, and what were M. d'Estaing's motives for taking upon himself to order some troops to enter Versailles. Some detachments of the foreign soldiery had been already summoned thither; and the city began to be alarmed at these movements. The inhabitants were of opinion, that four thousand of the national militia, the Swiss guards on duty, together with the King's guards, were sufficient for this service; they conjectured, therefore, that some other point was in view.

It happened, at the same time, that the late French guards, now formed at Paris into companies receiving stated pay, and known by the appellation of the Center Companies, aspired to the honour of guarding the King, and loudly proclaimed their ambition. But, whether it was that the Court dreaded the presence of men who might impede the King's departure, or that it could not view, without uneasiness, the functions of the guard exercised by those who were accused of having betrayed their royal master, this application proved extremely disagreeable. Whoever the secret agents had been, who circulated this idea amongst the troops of the Center, M. de la Fayette, who considered it as a new artifice of the cabal, found no difficulty in prevailing on the soldiers to renounce it. But

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M. d'Ef-

M. d'Estaing, who was commander of the national guards at Versailles, brought over a part of them, and ventured in the name of the rest, to require that a regiment should relieve them on that service ; and in order to protect the liberty of the King, and the National Assembly, against what was termed the insurrection of the French guards, the regiment of Flanders was called in ; and the King testified his satisfaction at this measure to M. d'Estaing. Versailles took the alarm : the arrival of this regiment spread a general consternation. The troops marched into the town with cannon, and with military stores ; and this warlike face of things made a considerable impression upon the Deputies. Mirabeau declaimed loudly against this step taken by the ministry ; but the ministry took shelter behind the requisition of the municipality. At the same time, the usual number of life-guards was doubled, supernumeraries also were added to that body ; and although these soldiers had manifested an attachment to the National Assembly, yet it was hoped that they might be disengaged from that attachment, by setting in opposition to it the love which they owed the King, and, especially, the new-comers appeared to be relied on.

Upon this, the distrust of the citizens broke forth. The dragoons had alarmed them ; but

the people was soon satisfied with respect to their inclinations. The life-guards being employed contrary to their original destination, in affairs relative to police, were beginning to become odious to the people. As to the regiment of Flanders, the citizens and the Court strove which should shower most careffes on it ; the former on the soldiers, the latter on the officers. The National Assembly, disquieted, saw itself split into two parties ; that of the Court had come forward with most boldness, or, if you will, courage, whenever the question of debate turned on the powers to be conferred upon the kingly office, and the voice of freedom was stifled in the contest. Paris was a prey to all the miseries of famine, even in the midst of abundance ; bread was dear, and of a bad quality ; the inhabitants were knocking at the doors of the bakers, in order to obtain relief ; it seemed that measures had been taken to exasperate the people against the new popular powers ; and persons, evidently paid for occasioning disturbance, besieged the shops of the bakers, carried away the bread, threw it into the river, and returned for the purpose of re-commencing this practice. The provinces were affrighted by a circulated whisper, * of the approaching flight

* Bruit sourd.

of the King, and of a counter-revolution ; and the party which desired it, already vaunted of it loudly, and with that overweening confidence, which it hath shewn upon every new conspiracy. At length the alarmed capital saw no other means of terminating its fears, both for France and for the Deputies, than by possessing the National Assembly and the King within her walls, where a hundred thousand arms were ready to defend them, where six hundred thousand persons were continually on the watch against conspiracies.

Such is the faithful picture of the situation of things, and of the minds of men, when the King's guards gave, on the first of October, an entertainment to the officers of the regiment of Flanders, and to several others of the military profession, whose number was now considerably augmented. Certain it is, that this was the first banquet which the King's guards, as a *corps*, had ever yet given. As endeavours had been made, for some days past, to win over the national guard of Versailles, several of its officers were invited upon this festive occasion. Nothing could be, apparently, more innocent, than an entertainment ; but the circumstances which attended this diffused terror amongst the citizens. The great object of this feast was, to attach the military to the King, to that King who,

at the same time, was represented as one sacrificed by the miscreants * of the National Assembly. Some affected to drink the health of the King and of the royal family, and to decline drinking prosperity to the nation, a toast which was proposed. The King returned from hunting ; he was prevailed upon to look in at this entertainment. The Queen was pressed to make her appearance towards the conclusion of the feast, where the grenadiers, the chasseurs, and the Swiss guards had been introduced ; she accordingly did appear there, with her family and some of the Court. The Dauphin is carried by his royal mother completely round the table. Enthusiasm takes possession of the guests ; sword in hand, they drink the august healths of all the family ; and the Court, bowing and curtseying, retires : then commenced those indecent orgies, which discovered and ruined the plot. The wine flows profusely, and the gallant guests become inflamed : the band plays that air so often warbled by the false friends of Louis XVI., as hypocrisy chants aloud the psalms of David, at the ceremony of an *Auto da fé* :

O Richard, O mon roi,
L'univers t'abandonne !

* Les brigands

A siege is ridiculously imitated by these Bacchanals ; some valorously scale the upper boxes of the Opera-house, where the banquet was given, and white cockades are distributed to the company. Soon after this exploit, the heroes sally forth into the courts of the castle, and the austere pencil of history refuses to depict the indecent farces which were there represented. It hath been constantly denied, that the national cockade was trampled under foot at these celebrated orgies ; but it cannot be denied, that the Court-ladies distributed white cockades to these heroic children of Bellona.*

The noise, and, to avail myself of the proper term, the uproar, was so violent, that, when intelligence of it was spread throughout Versailles, the people ran to witness this scandalous performance, which, nevertheless, was repeated three days after, at another repast given at the quarters of the life-guards : miserable follies, which were thus preparing to exasperate all France against the Court, and five or six hundred giddy wretches ! The Queen was suspected of being at the head of this machination. She had presented colours to the national guards of Versailles ; and the latter having waited on her, in order to thank her for the present, the Queen

* A ces militaires.

addressed

addressed them in these words : “ The nation “ and the army ought to be as well affected to the “ King, as we ourselves are. I have been quite “ charmed with what passed on Thursday.” This Thursday was the day of the entertainment. In fine, there was no doubt that she had been informed of the plan beforehand, as she had been present at the feast, and the minds of the citizens were already irritated against her. They were now persuaded, that the Queen was at the head of the conspiracy for carrying off the King, a circumstance which would have proved the cause of a civil war. And when, a few days after, a deputy, M. Pethion, gave notice of this Bacchanalian banquet to the Assembly, and another deputy had defied him to sign his declaration, Mirabeau rose and said, that he would sign it for him, and that he would produce convincing proofs, provided the Assembly would declare, that no person whatsoever, within the realm, was inviolable, the King excepted.

We have already seen with what rapidity all Paris was inflamed, up in arms, embodied, when public safety was endangered. At the tidings of the entertainment given by the life-guards, the commotion became universal. Every cockade but that of the nation, was proscribed, and some senseless men, who wore a black one, ran the risk of losing their lives. The people ex-

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claimed, that the plot was manifest ; that the contempt shewn for the national cockade, and the refusal to drink prosperity to the nation, amounted to a downright declaration of war ; that the appearance of a great number of knights of St. Louis, and of foreign uniforms, and of cockades of a single colour, was an evidence of the conspiracy ; that it was time to terminate so many inquietudes : and that since some were desirous of carrying away the King, in order to put him at the head of a party, the people had no other course to take, than to be beforehand with them, and to secure the King's person in the capital. To these emotions were added those of the lower class of citizens, who, weary of enduring famine, and persuaded that the King's presence would re-produce plenty of bread, the scarcity of which was imputed to the scheme laid for his departure, desired equally to secure him within the walls of Paris.

To will and to execute were the work but of a day. Hunger drove from the suburbs a multitude of women, who cried out that they must go in quest of the King ; and this dreadful declaration of mothers, who had not bread to give to their children, was the spring which put in motion all the deeds performed that day. No power could resist such an assemblage. They hurried to the Hôtel de Ville, through armed battalions

battalions drawn up in the open space before it. Some men disguised as women are along with them : they break open the Hôtel de Ville, in order to search there for weapons, and, with tumult undescribable, seize whatever arms they find, gather together the artillery, drag it after them, lay hold on all the women whom they meet, and compel them to join their army, then march, still recruiting according to their fashion ; and it is impossible to tell what might have been the effect of their capricious uproar, had not a citizen, named *Maillard*, put himself at their head, in order to discipline them, govern them, appease them, direct them, with an ability which is above all eulogium.

Meanwhile, the citizens also were desirous of bringing the King to Paris. Assembled in arms, they expressed their wishes in a manner which shewed that they were determined to be obeyed. The center companies, jealous of the honour of guarding the King, were moreover influenced by the sensation arising from offended pride. In vain does M. de la Fayette, who seemed astonished at the idea of doing violence to the King, endeavour to allay this fermentation ; he himself becomes the object of their menaces. He requires an order from the city council ; the order is given to him, and he sets out. No pencil can depict the frantic joy of Paris on beholding

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ing her militia march, with the intention of seeking and bringing away the King. The capital is now assured that her distress shall at length be terminated.

The women, led on by hunger, were advancing towards Versailles ; and *Maillard*, who was their general, prevailed on them (a matter of no little difficulty) to present themselves as mere suppliants to the National Assembly. It was at the juncture when the Assembly was still importunate with the King, when it was waiting for the so long retarded acceptance of the articles of the new constitution. The King assented to the requisition, making, at the same time, some remarks, and considered, he said, the alarming circumstances and the necessities of the state. But the Assembly asserted, that it ought not to be content with any thing but his entire acceptance. It was observed, that this pretended assent, together with its clauses, amounted to a real protest : that the rights of nations had existed before kings were ever thought of ; that this refusal to acknowledge them ought, at length, to determine the Assembly to rend that mysterious veil which concealed this important verity ; that the authority of kings becomes suspended, as often as the sovereign is occupied in giving law.

Maillard

Maillard had undertaken to be spokesman for the women, in order to prevent their speaking for themselves. His speech was divided into two heads, namely, the scarcity of bread during three days, and the contempt shewn for the national cockade. He requires that the life-guards, who continued to wear a white one, should dismiss it, and assume that of the nation ; and, at that very instant, those guards present him, on their part, with a national cockade. Upon this the women shouted, *Vive le Roi and the gentlemen of the life-guards !* And now was the time to speak ; the major part of these soldiers had been patriots, and their desertion was principally to be imputed to their officers, who were courtiers, and to such of the corps as, being but new-comers, had not been witnesses to the dangers, the labours, and the courage of the National Assembly. The Assembly sent a deputation to the King, to lay before him the representations of the inhabitants of Paris, with respect to the scarcity of provisions. His answer was such a one as the citizens could desire. It was not until ten o'clock at night, that he sent to the Assembly his entire and unconditional acceptance of the declaration of rights, and of the constitutional articles. Thus it was, that for six months he was continually obliged to give way to public opinion, which, had he been better advised, he would have constantly

stantly prevented. We have seen, at the present day, the King of Poland putting himself at the head of her revolution, and determining her to accede to what appeared to him adapted to her condition, while, here with us, the imprudent and extravagant conduct of the Court, and of the orders, have accelerated the advancement of the nation towards liberty. The reason is, that with us the Court was all-powerful, and in possession of the government. For a period of thirty years, the least powerful man in the kingdom was the King.

After the women had set out from Paris, there issued forth also a multitude of men, armed with pikes, battle-axes, sharpened stakes, men whose hatred was principally directed against the Queen and against the warriors of the life-guards. With this second army of invaders came several persons, whose appearance betokened that they were foreigners,* and who seemed to have been summoned for the occasion; for the men of Paris have a cast of countenance peculiar to themselves, and those who are acquainted with it are well able to distinguish such strangers as mix among them. These ferocious battalions had taken the lead of the national guards, with whom we must be careful to avoid confounding them. They

* De figure étrange---our populace would have called them *outlandish looking men.*

proved the cause of all the disturbance which ensued on the following day.

The military force of Versailles had been assembled round the castle. The King, who was returning from the chace, and who had heard talk of women only, had forbidden the soldiery to fire. Meanwhile, prodigious was the tumult occasioned by these different multitudes, embodied, or disorderly, pouring to and fro, and changing every moment their movements and their forms ; citizens of Paris, citizens of Versailles, men, women, national guards, in one mighty scene of confusion on this side of the iron gate. It is said, that the Sieur Brunout, a Parisian soldier, attempting to approach the iron gate, was repulsed by the life-guards ; that M. de Savonieres and two others pursued him sabre in hand ; and that M. de Savonieres having received a blow with a musket, this was a signal of the hatred subsisting between the King's guards and the national guards of Versailles. The latter fired several shots upon the King's guards, who retreated : still more unfortunately, at the moment when a deputation of the King's guards, unarmed, was carrying a letter of civility to the national guard of Versailles, a volley of musket-shot was fired by the King's party. The national guards imagined that they were betrayed ; and now fury takes possession of their hearts ; some

charge

charge their muskets, others point the cannon ; every thing continued to proclaim disorder, when, at midnight, a body of 15,000 men arrives, by three roads, from Paris, with a train of artillery, and headed by M. de la Fayette. Fortunate, had they arrived but three hours sooner.

He had himself sent notice of this army to the castle. Whether it was that the Court was frightened, or that the moment was now come for executing the project of the King's departure, the carriages are got ready, and he is entreated to seek security in flight. But these carriages were arrested by the national guard of Versailles, and the King positively refused to depart. He declared, that he would rather perish than see the blood of Frenchmen streaming in his quarrel. This virtuous sentiment, which hath always swayed the King, saved France, and is a proof that the project had been kept a secret from him. The intention evidently was to take advantage of the alarm of the moment, in order to persuade the King to attempt an escape, and every disposition was made for the providing a sufficient force to escort him.

M. de la Fayette, assured of the obedience of the national guards, succeeded in tranquillizing the Assembly and the King. He billeted his troops in Versailles, and peace was perfectly re-established in that city, when he retired at half

past

past five o'clock in the morning, in order to write to the municipality of Paris an account of the state of things, and to allay the agitation of the capital.

About six o'clock the caitiffs, who, during the night, had formed themselves into squadrons, or posted themselves even in the hall of the Assembly (the Assembly had been obliged to surrender the place to the multitude) made their approaches towards the castle. They found the passages ill secured, and poured into the courts like an inundation : they met with some opposition at the entrance of the castle, and one man was killed. This multitude, now frantic, falls furiously on the life-guards, who retreat to the apartments, determined to make there a most vigorous resistance. The banditti uttered a thousand imprecations against the Queen ; and, animated by the hope of pillage, attacked every door as accident directed them. The King and Queen, alike alarmed, were seeking for each other ; but by the zeal and prudence of the life-guards they met ; the Queen had merely time to throw certain garments on her, and to gain the King's apartments.

This insurrection, in which several of the royal guards were wounded, was prompt in its commencement, and rapid in its progress. M. de la Fayette, informed of the affair, immediately dis-

dispatches his aids-de-camp to assemble the national guards ; he follows them with the swiftness of lightning, and ere long the national grenadiers are in the castle ; they take possession of it, drive the caitiffs before them, at the very moment when they had forced the apartment of the King, disperse those who are glutting themselves with plunder, and tranquillity is re-established in the castle.

Without doors, the miscreants had taken two of the life-guards, and beheaded them, in spite of every effort made by some of the national militia. At length the latter became complete masters of the place, and routed the banditti, who moved away with an intention to pillage other quarters, still pursued, and still discomfited by the soldiery of the nation. The King's horses, and those of the life-guards, which had been stolen, are retaken. At length those desperate villains bend their course back to the capital, carrying with them, as trophies of victory, the heads of the two life-guards.

With them disappeared all the horrors of those bloody scenes by which the morning had been distinguished. It was then that the national character was displayed in all its candour : the Parisian soldiery and the King's guards embrace : the latter take the military oath : the King receives the homage of the national guards, who

who fill all his apartments, and recommends his own guards to their protection. He proceeds to the balcony, in order to shew himself to his people ; his people receives him with shouts of *Vive le Roi*. The Queen comes, in her turn, to exhibit the like attachment, and to receive the like homage : at length the people gives that shout, so expressive of the universal wish of France, *the King at Paris !* The King declares that he will go to Paris, on condition that he shall bring his wife and children with him. And now the delirium becomes general ; officers, soldiers, King's guards, national guards, all congratulate and embrace one another. The royal guards change their cockade ; they throw their shoulder-belts to the national grenadiers, and the latter receive the present ; they exchange hats and swords ; and every thing evinces that they were not the citizens of Paris, who shewed a hatred to the life-guards. The National Assembly, which had sent a deputation to the King, with an injunction to remain near his person, which, on the report of his departure, had decreed that the Assembly was inseparable from the King's person, send a second deputation to present him with this decree ; it was likewise determined, that a third deputation should accompany him to Paris, where the King arrived that evening, attended by his guards, who

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marched

marched in brotherly union with the national militia. The multitude which followed him rent the air with shouts of joy ; and the women, persuaded that abundance would now revive, and famine retire at the presence of the Monarch, evinced, by their vulgar but energetic language, that that had been the real object of their journey.* The King, now arrived at Paris, declares that he intends to make it his principal place of residence.

Thus was stifled that conspiracy, the motive of which was, to prevail upon the King to throw himself into the arms of the privileged party, to the end that, in his name, it might make war upon his people. It was reported, that M. d'Orleans had formed the design of taking advantage of the disturbances, with a view of being appointed regent of the kingdom : but, besides that, notwithstanding the inquiry insti-

* The women cried to the people which crowded to meet the King, " We are bringing with us the baker, the baker's wife, and the baker's little boy." Thus a family, well known in the profession of the law, bears the title of *Boulanger*, (baker) because, during a famine, it distributed a great deal of bread to the people. This is the popular style of panegyric.—*Note of M. Rabaut de Saint-Etienne.*

Among the ancient Romans, there was scarce a family of any consequence which had not received a nick-name from the people, and those nick-names became hereditary. The old English observed the same custom ; with this exception, that the nick-name perished with the person on whom it had been bestowed ; thus *Long-sword*, *Strong-bow*, &c. and of the kings, *Beaumerc*, *Cœur de Lion*, *Rufus*, &c.

tuted by the Châtelet, which bore him no affection, no discovery could be made of such a plot, M. d'Orleans had but very few circumstances in his favour, and a great many chances against him. And with respect to Mirabeau, who was accused of favouring his pretensions, it is well known, that, at that juncture, he was not upon good terms with the Duke of Orleans. At length the design, which hath been since renewed by M. de Breteuil and M. de Bouillié, of carrying off the king to Montmédy, serves to justify the conjectures which the public had formed, with regard to the plot for conveying him at that time to Metz.

Meanwhile M. d'Orleans, in concert with M. de la Fayette, prevails upon the King to grant him a commission to the Court of London. The principal motives for this absence were, to deprive ill-minded persons of a pretext for making use of his name, in order to excite commotions in the city of Paris, and that M. de la Fayette might thereby find it less difficult to preserve tranquillity in the capital. Such was the reason assigned by M. d'Orleans himself to the National Assembly, in the month of July following, which reason was not contradicted by M. de la Fayette.

The National Assembly continued to sit for some time longer at Versailles, until a proper

place had been prepared for its reception in the capital. And now, freed from that solicitude which had harrassed it incessantly, it directed all its care to the constitution. Its long and uninterrupted sittings were employed, either in debating those important questions, upon which the happiness of posterity depended, or in allaying the disturbances which had arisen in divers places, during so long an interregnum of the laws. In the course of three months, it organized the municipalities and the primary assemblies ; it fixed the qualifications of electors ; enacted provisional laws relating to criminal jurisprudence, and to riots ; regulated such part of the business of the taxes, as called most loudly for the interference of the legislature ; abolished *lettres de cachet* ; ordered the pension-list to be laid before it, and entered upon various branches of the affairs relative to the army, the pay of which it augmented ; turned its attention to the finances, on account of which it established the *caisse de l'extraordinaire*, and to the marine, with respect to which it meant to practise strict œconomy. Ere long, there was no more feudal system to be seen, no more privileges, no more orders, no more corporations. The sale of offices was abolished : the nation had resumed her rights of enacting laws and imposing taxes, and France saw none but citizens restored to their

their just rights, which had been forgotten during so many centuries.

Above all, it took advantage of the generous enthusiasm, which had seized the people of France, in order to annihilate, for evermore, the unjust privileges of the provinces. These privileges had been, during the empire of despotism, the only hope remaining to the friends of liberty ; a hope continually frustrated, as the ministry had introduced there, with a more exquisite degree of cunning, all the influence which despotism could employ. They who, unable to destroy the kingdom, still entertained the hope of distracting her, exerted themselves to prevail on the provinces which had states, to claim, and even to clamour for their privilege. These provinces had been organized into the three ancient orders, and these orders they were desirous of preserving. But the nation, fully aware of the nature of such pretensions, could not possibly fall into the snare ; and the National Assembly was obeyed with exultation, when, pursuant to the plan proposed by the Abbé Siéyes, it ordained the division of the kingdom into eighty-three departments, subdivided into districts and cantons. More than two thousand deputies of cities and of burghs hurried straightway to Paris from every quarter of the kingdom, for the purpose of establishing

their pretensions ; and, after three months spent in the most astonishing and painful labour, the division was happily accomplished. Accordingly, it might have been said, that we had no longer any provinces : nay, the very word *province* hath disappeared from our vocabulary. The kingdom, then, was consolidated, and the apprehension of a confederacy of republics was done away.

But the question which most deeply occupied the attention of the Assembly, was that relative to the estates of the clergy, which the Assembly wished to offer to the state as a pledge of safety, as the sole mean of liquidating her enormous debt, and of saving her from the ignominy of bankruptcy. The most violent opposition arose in the very heart of the Assembly ; but at length it was decreed, that the ecclesiastical estates were all at the disposal of the nation, subject, however, to the charge of providing in a proper manner for the expences of public worship, for the maintenance of its ministers, and for the relief of the poor. It was ordered, that no parish minister should have less than twelve hundred livres a year, exclusively of the house and gardens annexed to that parsonage. This celebrated decree, passed on the second of November 1789, was promulgated on the third, and, on the fourth, accepted by the King. On the following

ing day, the National Assembly gave the finishing blow to the privileged orders, by this simple decree, which, in France, is now become constitutional: **THERE IS NO LONGER ANY DISTINCTION OF ORDERS.**

So great was the multitude of abuses, with which every branch of the government was overwhelmed, that the National Assembly could not create without destroying: but, at the same time, it raised a multitude of enemies against itself. My pen would prove unequal to the task of recording all the means which were employed at once for discrediting the Assembly, the authority of which possessed a great ascendant over the nation, and these attempts were directed either to the obstructing it in its labours, or to the retarding their execution. The clergy, incensed at seeing its estates alienated, and at being reduced to salaries, put in practice those measures so familiar to the church, and which, perhaps, might have succeeded but for the suppression of the tithes, which species of revenue had been so well collected in the country. The ecclesiastics accused the National Assembly of an intention to destroy religion. All the canons in the kingdom entered into a combination, and almost every chapter protested. Very many of the bishops, after the example of the prelate of Tréguier, overspread their respective dioceses

with incendiary mandates, and negotiated a bull with Rome, for the intimidation of the weak-minded, and for devoting the National Assembly by the maledictions of the church. Nevertheless, the Assembly disconcerted this conspiracy, by making constant protestation of its union with the Pope, as head of the Christian church, with regard to spiritual concerns, and of its fidelity to the religion of our forefathers.*

At the same time was carried on a prodigious manufacture of pamphlets and periodical publications. It was well known, that books had considerably assisted the revolution ; it was, therefore, imagined, that books might effect a counter-revolution : for this was the term which had been consecrated by the party. The ecclesiastics expected to dazzle the people of France, by disseminating ten times as many volumes against the National Assembly, as there had been published in its favour : a multitude of printing-presses, both within and without the kingdom, were devoted to this pious merchandize ; all the different kinds of style were summoned to aid the holy cause ; poems, songs, epigrams,

* The reader who wishes to see this grand business, relative to the change in the condition of the French clergy, treated more at large, will receive ample satisfaction from the two speeches of Mirabeau on *Ecclesiastical Property*, and from his immortal speech on *The Civil Constitution of the Clergy*.

satires,

satires, tragedies, were written against the National Assembly, against its committees, against its most celebrated members, against the city of Paris, against the national guards, whom they mentioned with extraordinary contempt. Pamphlets succeeded pamphlets, with a rapidity proportioned to the fury which engendered them.

At the formation of the municipalities, the hopes of the privileged orders were awakened. This new authority, the first degree in the future administration, but the only popular power at that time existing, appeared to them an infallible mean of diminishing in order to destroy. They aspired, then, to fill these employments with their creatures, and this project proved not unsuccessful in some places. Wherever the electors had made an improper choice, they became victims to the arts of their enemies; and the massacres which have ensued in certain cities of the kingdom, were occasioned by evil-minded municipalities.

The parliaments, foreseeing their own suppression, pursued a course less determined, as they were sensible that their authority had never enjoyed any other support than that of public esteem, which now they had forfeited for ever. But, in the two provinces, where the plot for carrying off the King had been laid, and almost brought to perfection, they displayed greater boldness,

boldness, as they imagined that there their cause would be espoused. The parliaments of Metz and Rouen durst protest against the decrees of the National Assembly : their conduct was imitated by the parliament of Rennes, mighty, as it imagined, in the aid of the nobles of Bretagne : but the Assembly denounced its indignation against them ; the towns under their jurisdiction loudly exclaimed at their audacity ; and these their grand exertions produced no other effect, than to humble them still more, and justify their approaching destruction.

While the privileged orders were thus ardently employed, the ministry served their cause by its inaction ; and, by retarding the transmission and the execution of the new laws, was prolonging the existence of anarchy. It indulged the hope, that the people, disgusted with confusion, would call loudly for the old government, under which it enjoyed a stupid tranquillity. At the same time, these foes to liberty infidiously created a scarcity of grain, infidiously created a scarcity of specie, infidiously refused to give employment to the artisans, in the hope that, at length, the people would grow weary of its own courage.

Within the walls of the Assembly, some vehement speakers inflamed the party which lamented its lost privileges ; and animosities were there

there carried to so unwarrantable lengths, that some representatives of the people, to which their lives belonged, exposed them, on several occasions, in duels.

Without the kingdom, the mal-contents, dispersed through every court in Europe, and seconded by almost every one of our ambassadors, were endeavouring to disseminate their hatred against France; in those courts they laid the foundations of a general confederacy of all the powers of Christendom against us. Their object was, to persuade the several crowned heads, that this cause was the cause of kings, and that it behoved kings to unite their strength, in order to restore the arbitrary authority of Louis XVI. Imprudent men! who never perceived that they were, at the same time, teaching Europe that this was also the cause of nations. Two princes, who had taken refuge at Turin, assembled there some of the gentry: they threatened us with an invasion by the way of Nice, by the way of Savoy, and had sent emissaries into Provence, to Nimes, to Lyon, while the King of Sardinia put his army in motion on the frontiers. It was then publicly declared, that Paris was no longer worthy of the presence of her King, and that Lyon deserved the honour of becoming the capital of the empire.

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The National Assembly, occupied in parrying these attacks, was still advancing with great strides, trampling upon the ruins of despotism, combating every prejudice, discomfiting every error, making war on every abuse, destroying usurped rights, and re-establishing that precious equality, which gives anew to nations the robust benefit of youth,* and regenerates them, by restoring them to their primitive state of purity. The nation at large supported the Assembly; and its table was covered with addresses from every town and city, expressive of their affection, of their admiration, of their gratitude, and promising it three millions of soldiers for the defence of the constitution, and encouraging it to persevere in its patriotism.

In fine, the King himself appeared to lend it his assistance. One of the principal engines of the privileged party had been, to assert that the King was not at liberty, and that his accepting or sanctioning the decrees presented to him, was altogether against his inclination. He came, therefore, unsolicited to the National Assembly, on the 4th of February, and, after complaining of the attempts made to shake the basis of the new constitution, he declared it to be his desire, that it should be universally known, that the

* Rajeunit.

monarch.

monarch and the representatives of the nation were united ; that their wishes were the same ; that he would defend that constitutional liberty, the principles of which the general wish, in concert with his own, had consecrated ; and that, conjointly with the Queen, he would early form the heart and the sentiments of his son, for that new order of things, which the circumstances of the empire had introduced and sanctified.

As soon as the King had withdrawn, the Assembly voted him an address of thanks ; and, taking advantage of the consternation into which this step of the Monarch had thrown the minority of its members, and, desirous of engaging them to coalesce with the Assembly, with the King, and with the constitution, it decreed, that every member should be obliged to take the civic oath, and that none should be allowed to vote who had not first performed that ceremony. It likewise decreed an address to the provinces, in order to remind them of what the Assembly had done for the sake of public liberty, to lay before them what it proposed to do, for the complete regeneration of the empire, and to profess them against those unfavourable impressions which evil-minded persons were endeavouring to create amongst them.

This step taken by the King, so evidently uncontrolled, for a while disconcerted the enemies of

of the public welfare, but did not determine them to relinquish their machinations. On the one hand, they still affected to represent him as a martyr, and to decorate themselves with the title of royalists ; but on the other hand, they thought that they could place a more solid hope in the exertions of the fugitive princes, and in the assistance which, by their account, all the sovereigns of Europe were to afford them. The mal-contents multiplied, in proportion as the National Assembly proceeded in its reformatory efforts : its most zealous partisans were sometimes astonished at its boldness, and its enemies affected to despise it for imprudence. They were persuaded, that its labours would endure but for a moment, and that the nation would, ere long, be obliged to return to the late government, or, at least, to accept the conditions of the *séance royale*, of the paternal wisdom of which conditions they still boasted without intermission.

Determined on regaining their rights, or, at least, to obtain revenge or to perish, they employed at once all the means which each derived from his former dignity, or from his former influence. The army had been ever their hope ; no pains were spared to detach it from the interests of the nation ; but the regiments gave, emulously, the most convincing proofs of patriotism ; and, from that moment, the army became

came divided, like the nation, into two distinct parties, the privileged orders and the third estate, the officers and the private soldiers.

Attempts were next made to sow division amongst the regiments, to discontent them and corrupt them ; this was attended with some unhappy consequences in Hainault, a frontier of the Emperor ; in Languedoc, where the emigrants maintained a correspondence from Nice and from Turin : but the virtue of the nation, the patriotism which resulted from it, and the soldiery, which had been deceived, soon discovered the error which they had committed ; they themselves complained loudly of the perfidious productions, by which their enemies were endeavouring to make them hate the constitution.

The tribunals still existing, exerted themselves to retain their authority ; the parliament of Bourdeaux, in particular, left nothing unattempted with a view to excite a revolt. The tribunals in which the provosts presided, wreaked their vengeance upon such citizens as were attached to the revolution. The Châtelet of Paris, especially, appeared a valuable instrument, from which important advantages might be frequently derived. The National Assembly had granted to it, provisionally, and for a short time, the power of trying criminals for

treason against the nation ; and this provisional authority was prolonged, as soon as the Assembly understood that that tribunal took advantage of it, in order to institute prosecutions against several distinguished members of the popular party. The Assembly would not endure that its virtue should be even suspected ; and this probity for a long time proved dangerous to the public interest. The National Assembly was reproached with a fatal indulgence ; it was urged from every quarter to erect a tribunal for the trial of state crimes, and for putting a stop to a multitude of flagitious undertakings ; all which were still proceeding with impunity. Faveras had been accused of the design for carrying off the King, and conducting him to Péronne : the Châtelet condemned him to suffer death ; and Faveras protested, to the last, that he was innocent. But another culprit escaped justice, although there had been discovered a scheme written with his own hand, wherein he proposed, with respect to Metz, the same plan, which hath been since frustrated, with respect to Montmédy. Perhaps the man was innocent ; but, what proof was there that Faveras was guilty ?

While the nobles were endeavouring to create dissensions in the army, and the men of the law, assisted by all the wiles of a multitude of practitioners, were employing all the cunning of chicane,

chicane, the clergy was making use of the weapons which are peculiar to it. In every age, and in every nation, it hath been the maxim of the sacerdotal order, to consider religion and itself as one and the same thing, in like manner as every teacher confounds his doctrine with himself; the cause of the priesthood hath been invariably the cause of Heaven; he who injures the priests, injures God. They accordingly attempted, on several occasions, to bring the cause of Heaven before an Assembly which should confine itself to the regulation of earthly concerns. The Assembly at length declared, that its attachment to the Catholic religion of Rome could not be called in question, at a time when that worship was placed by the Assembly at the head of various articles of public expence, and that the majesty of religion, and the profound respect due to it, did not allow of its becoming a subject of debate, since the Assembly had no power over consciences. This sage response, of which, antecedently to the establishment of the United States, no nation, no sovereign, had afforded any example, furnished the clergy with the desired pretext for protesting against the proceedings of the National Assembly.* The

pulpits,

* The priesthood, by its vain pretensions, and by its criminal usurpations, hath been uniformly undermining that very worship which it affects to defend. It hath accustomed

pulpits, and particularly the confessionalists, re-founded with declamations against it. In various places were renewed certain ancient religious customs, which, latterly, good sense and reason had suffered to fall into oblivion. The people, in amazement, submitted to the imposition ; and several towns were witnesses to scenes of rage and bloodshed, in consequence of these religious and irrational disputes. But these outrages were not imitated in other parts of the kingdom ; they were the final vociferations of fanaticism, in regions which she had hitherto bedrenched with blood at pleasure.

At the same time complaints were made, that the ministry was collecting an army in Bretagne, where the towns insisted that an army was not necessary ; that the garrisons were withdrawn from the frontiers, where the affrighted towns required

the people to consider religion and the ministers of religion as one and the same thing ; what, then, is the consequence ? when these ministers, by their slothfulness and voluptuousness, have incurred the disrespect of the laity, that disrespect is unhappily extended to religion herself. Again ; by their usurpations and their despotism they have disgusted an enlightened age, and given occasion for that alarming notion which is but too prevalent with many, that the Christian religion is unfavourable to human liberty ; whereas, true Christianity is the protectress of liberty. Thus hath the clergy been conducive to those writings of injudicious, though ingenious men, which have been unjustly dignified with the title of philosophy.

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their presence ; that the national guards upon those frontiers were unsupplied with arms, while the Emperor, the King of Sardinia, and the King of Spain, were assembling battalions, which seemed destined to invade us ; that the city of Marseilles was filled with soldiery, as if there had been an intention to favour the approach of the Spanish fleet.

The mal-contents went even as far as Germany and England, in quest of writers disposed to wield the pen in their behalf. They caused the labours of these writers to be translated into our language, with the view of persuading inconsiderate minds, that we were condemned by every nation in Europe. But they persuaded none but those who were well inclined to be persuaded, and each recognized, in those productions, the materials with which he himself had furnished the authors.

Not a few of the financiers, who were dissatisfied with the new order of things, exerted themselves to feed this confusion. They refused to receive the taxes ; they applied themselves to the discrediting the national notes, known by the name of *assignats*, because their payment is assigned upon a security of many hundred millions. They affected to put them in competition with notes, which had no kind of security whatever. They even dared to prophesy, that the national estates would never be put up to sale.

Within the walls of the Assembly, the privileged party employed itself in retarding the operations, for the purpose of continuing the state of anarchy ; in vitiating the decrees, when its influence preponderated, in order to procure the enactment of bad laws ; in disturbing the Assembly by scandalous behaviour, with a view of depriving it of the public esteem ; in proclaiming themselves the King's friends, in order to beget an opinion that the patriots were his enemies ; its diligent correspondence scattered regularly through the provinces, every pamphlet, which was the offspring of its policy, and every project which it deemed worthy of being put in execution. Every person was convinced that the leaders of this party held intelligence with the Queen, to whose apartments they frequently resorted ; and these conferences received the title of *the Austrian Committee*, as the Emperor was supposed to be their prime mover and protector. One of the principal practices of this party was, to cause certain periodical papers, affecting an air of popularity, to be read to the King ; and as, in these papers, the King was personally and virulently abused, the party indulged the hope of disgusting him with his situation, and of prevailing on him to escape at the first favourable opportunity. Accordingly, it was suspected by many, that the authors

authors of these outrageous journals received their wages from the party.

But the deputies of the patriotic party displayed as much activity in defeating these plots, as their adversaries shewed in contriving them. The nation, agitated by these contrary impulsions, became only the more impatient and more active ; fully acquainted with her true interest, she did not suffer herself to be deceived by any species of hypocrisy. The immense number of addresses, and of patriotic offerings, already proved indisputably the opinion of the public : but, at length, the citizens of Anjou and Bretagne, wearied with these repeated agitations, by which attempts were made to melt down * the national courage, united in a grand confederation of men in arms. Their example was followed by the rest of the kingdom, alike tired of the many obstacles opposed to their new liberty. Nothing was to be seen any where but battalions of citizens, who, assembled in thousands, were swearing to live free, or to perish. The clang of arms, the military music, the banners floating on the wind, the delightful sentiments of brotherhood, which bound so great a multitude to one and the same cause, all awakened in their hearts the enthusiasm of liberty. The troops of the line desired to take a part in these confede-

* Fondre.

rations ; several of their commanders, in conjunction with the ministry, for a long time refused their request ; but, at length, the King himself permitted the soldiers to be patriots. France beheld four millions of men in arms upon her plains, millions conscious of their strength, and well acquainted with their rights.

While the machinations of the mal-contents were every where disconcerted by this mighty display of force, and the earth seemed to bring forth armies, the National Assembly was proceeding in its operations. It had passed a multitude of successive decrees for the preservation of the estates of the clergy, which estates were, in several places, suffering considerably, both from the friends and from the enemies of the new order of things. It had made every necessary regulation for securing that precious pledge, which was to answer for the debt of the nation, and for establishing the maintenance of the ecclesiastics. It had suspended the monastic vows, it finished with suppressing them, and fixed the mode of treatment to be observed with respect to those who had belonged to any of the religious communities. Its zeal was signalized by new benefits for the people. It abolished the duty upon hides, upon oils, upon soap, upon starch, and upon the marking of iron, destructive duties, the abolition of which had been demanded in

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the instructions of its constituents. Above all, it abolished the *gabelle*,* that hateful and disastrous impost, against which the nation had ineffectually clamoured in several meetings of the States-General, and which, for several centuries, had proved the source of much sedition, and, consequently, of much punishment. The necessities of the state obliged the Assembly to introduce, provisionally, in place of the *gabelle*, a contribution more supportable. In the same manner, it hath since suppressed the heavy tax upon tobacco; and these two necessaries, tobacco and salt, became at last an object of commerce. The people felt the advantage of paying only one *sous* for salt, which before had cost it fourteen.

Meanwhile the Assembly framed a code relative to the redemption of the feudal rights; it drew up regulations for the temporary payment of tithe; it was seriously, and for a long time, occupied in the organization of the judicial power; it laid the foundations of new laws with respect to the uniformity † of weights and measures; an important undertaking, but which requires the co-operation of several powers; it promised the institution of juries, a promise which it hath since performed, the only substantial pledge of individual liberty, and which had ex-

* The salt tax.

† L'unité.

isted at the commencement of the monarchy ; it decreed a free trade to India ; it laid down the principles of its future polity, with relation to the colonies, a polity which hath since been but too much disregarded, by obliging the Assembly to determine upon questions, as to which it would, at first, have proved sufficient to consult situations and occasions ; and it sent out instructions to the colonies ; lastly, it set at liberty all such as had been imprisoned by arbitrary commands, and referred their respective cases to the regular course of justice.

The abolition of the feudal rights had infringed upon the revenues of certain foreign princes or seigneurs, who were proprietors in France ; the Assembly made them a proposal for adjusting the indemnifications, to which they severally laid claim. This affair was productive of threats from the said princes, who pretended to a right of sovereignty within their French territories, and that this right could not be compensated with money ; strange subterfuge to issue from the lips of princes ! for every one knows that princes possess the liberty of selling, not only their rights of sovereignty, but likewise their cities, their provinces, and their subjects. Some proprietary princes threatened to invade France with the military force of Germany. The Assembly, unshakable in its resolutions, and in its plan of main-

maintaining the uniformity of the laws and of rights within the realm, returned no other answer than a second offer of indemnification.

Meanwhile the Assembly laid down constitutional principles relative to the army ; it framed provisional regulations for the national guards, until that body, which is the true public force, should be organized ; it regulated the expences of the department of foreign affairs, and the expences of the council, and the amount of the King's pension, improperly termed the civil list. And at a time when the minds of men were elevated with the lofty idea of the future glory of France, and had deeply imbibed the sovereign principles of liberty, the Assembly decreed mural crowns to the conquerors of the Bastille, caused the figures of the chained nations to be removed from the insulting pedestal of the statue of Louis XIV., declared that the French nation would never more make war, from a spirit of making conquests ; attached Corsica to France by the delightful chains of liberty and equality, and rendered a sincere homage to these rights of human society, by a [public mourning for the death of Franklin.

These two careers, so opposite, of the National Assembly on the one side, and of its enemies on the other, could not fail of being attended with unequal success. It is easy to judge, whether the

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advantage lay with those, who were desirous of giving to the empire, which demanded it, a vigorous and free constitution, or with those whose only wish was to obstruct it or destroy it.

There was one decree, in particular, which provoked the privileged party more than any of those which had been passed ; and yet, this decree required nothing but the sacrifice of certain frivolous rights, unworthy of the citizens of a state enjoying liberty : it was the decree against titles, armorial bearings, and liveries. It was proposed and seconded by the patriotic deputies of the order of nobility heretofore existing. The suppression of coats of arms was a consequence derived from the abolition of nobility, of the feudal system, and of privileges ; for blazonry, and the armorial ensigns peculiar to the nobles, were the emblems of the feudal authority, and liveries bore an affinity to these colours ; and, with respect to titles, they appertained either to a nobility which no longer was in existence, or to vanity, the irreconcileable enemy of equality, and which, consequently, ought to be abolished by the laws, in order that it may be abolished by our manners.

From this day, then, the greatest part of the nobles of the kingdom became the unappeasable enemies of the constitution : it hath even been asserted more than once, that this decree

had determined them to excite a civil war, and to perish upon the ruins of France, rather than renounce their claim to honour. To honour ! - astonishing and memorable instance of the frivolity of human kind, and of the despotism of prejudices ! But this very indignation hath justified the decree ; it hath proved, that the nobles were thus tenacious of the symbols of their former influence, only because they did not look upon that influence as lost, or because they cherished the hope of recovering it. Many of those who approved this law, censured the National Assembly as having enacted it too soon, and at a time when all the conspiracies were in agitation, and every court in Europe solicited to become our enemy. But, if we consider the circumstances only, we may observe also, that the moment when France possessed most energy, was the moment for discomfiting the plots against her liberty.*

In fact, her force was prodigious, if the force of an empire consists in the courage and the fidelity of its citizens. The contempt affected

* I confess that I cannot refuse my assent to this opinion of the French historian. It appears to have been a stroke of true policy in the National Assembly, to strip the nobles of their uniform, if one may so express it, and thus confound them with the mass of society. Take away the badge of a party, and you diminish its strength.

for her militia caused in the nation no surprise, for the Persians in the same manner had contemned the Greeks, the Spaniards contemned the Hollanders, and Burgundy and Austria beheld Switzerland with disdain. But France can boast a phalanx of eight hundred thousand men, who have every one borne arms, and all the rest were determined to be freemen, or to perish.

It was at the moment when all the citizens were united one to another, by federal agreements, and when France was overspread with camps, of twelve, of twenty, and of thirty thousand men, the Assembly decreed a general confederation at Paris, by deputations from all the citizen-soldiers, as well as from the troops upon the other establishment. The 14th of July was the day on which the Bastille was taken, and from which France hath dated the new æra of her liberty. The *Champ de Mars*, for ever famous for the assemblage of the troops, which, the year preceding, had menaced ruin to the capital, was the appointed place of rendezvous, as if in order to purify, with incense burned in honour of liberty, a plain which had been polluted by the vestiges of despotism. It bears, at this day, the name of *The Field of the Confederation*.

This field, which is four hundred toises in length, and of a breadth proportionate, is bounded

ed to the right and left by lofty trees, while the perspective is terminated by the Military School. There it was that, on a vast scaffold, the National Assembly and the King were to be placed, in order that the spectators might be witnesses of the oath, which was to be taken for the preservation of the constitution. The grand idea was conceived, of seating within the inclosure four hundred thousand spectators, who were expected to be present at this august ceremony. It was necessary to remove several feet of earth from the surface, and to carry that earth to the sides of the enclosure, for the purpose of forming seats, after the manner of an amphitheatre.* Twelve thousand labourers, unprovided with other work, were employed upon this occasion ; but this mercenary task was making but a slow progress, and the work to be accomplished was immense. The inhabitants of Paris were apprehensive that the field would not be ready against the 14th of July, and the commemoration of that æra was precious to them. Then it was, that one of those traits which characterise at once the passion of liberty, and the vivacity of the French, was displayed in all its vigour. The citizens took the task upon themselves. From every quarter of that vast city were seen marching, two and

* Pour y former les gradins.

two, the inhabitants shouldering the shovel and the spade, and animated by music, the airs of which reminded them of the deliciousness of liberty, and promised them the victory over their enemies. They were accompanied by their wives and daughters. Some priests, and some of those who had belonged to monastic orders, marched with them side by side. The workmen, the artisans of different professions, mixed joyfully with the throng, preceded by various ensigns expressive of their patriotism. Ere long the earth, removed by so many generous and free hands, was conveyed to the spot fixed on for the erection of the seats, or served to elevate, in the center, the majestic altar of their country. The spectator beheld, with a sentiment of tenderness, delicate women impelling the wheel-barrow, or handling the shovel. Mothers, while urging their children to join in the general task, addressed to each of them these expressions : “ My son, thou wilt one day tell thy children, “ that thy hands assisted in erecting the altar of “ thy country.” Affected by this spectacle, the soldiers deputed from the provincial federations, lent the aid of their vigorous arms to the labours of the Parisian multitude. In the course of a few days was completely prepared, for the national ceremony, a theatre of so vast magnitude,

ture, that nothing like it had ever before been performed by human hands.

At length that ceremony, for ever memorable, took place. The citizen-troops of the departments, distinguished by their banners, the infantry, the cavalry, the marines, and the foreign soldiery in the service of France, were marshalled in due order ; after which, the King and the National Assembly took the oath to maintain the constitution ; the oath was repeated by all the citizens under arms, and the immense concourse of spectators applauded the solemn obligation. They all swore, likewise, to continue free, or perish. This oath was pronounced on the same day through the whole extent of the kingdom.

BOOK THE FIFTH.

ONE of the great benefits conferred on France by the recent revolution, was the restoring to the people that existence, civil and political, which it had lost for so many ages, and of which it is deprived of in most governments. It hath been too long a maxim that the people is to be ruled by a rod of iron ; that it is incapable of understanding its true interests ; that the homeliness of its education, and of its labours, unfits it for attention to matters of public concern ; and that the care of governing it must be confided to persons of a higher class, who understand its interests better than it does itself. In the revolution of France, endeavours have been made to support these sophisms by examples. The violences to which the people hath been driven in various places, not only against its oppressors, but even sometimes against the innocent, and those who have never offended it by any direct injury, have been adduced as arguments to prove, that it should be excluded from all influence over the administration of the commonwealth.

But, besides that it is inhuman to take advantage of the ignorance of a people, that the government under which it lived had rendered ignorant; of a homeliness, the fruit of that policy which consisted in abandoning it to a brutish stupidity; and of the vices of servitude, which ought rather to be lamented than condemned, since that servitude had been imposed on it in spite of nature, which revolts at the degradation, it is not difficult to perceive, that the lords of humankind hold such language for no other reason, than because they are in love with authority.

Add to this, that nothing can justify the violation of the rights of society, and the universal injury committed against man, when one or more individuals pretend to the right of governing the remainder, and of propagating their tyranny from generation to generation.* The social contract, which had first united them all as equals, conferred not upon any of them the exclusive government of all the rest. The public interest was the interest of every one; and, as laws are, after all, but conventions, it is evident, that those interested in them should all participate in their formation. The assertion, that a single individual knows better than a

* De pere en fils.

whole people what is fit for its condition, is a grand imposture, contradicted by almost every history of royal government. How many monarchs have there been, who thought of nothing but their own enjoyments, but of gratifying their passions, but of augmenting their revenues, and accumulating authority, but of sacrificing their subjects in order to aggrandize their territories, and of purchasing, with the slaughter of millions, the lying appellation of *Great!* Had their subjects been consulted, would the latter have consented to be governed by such maxims?

Good sense and experience agree in proving, that whenever the people hath been permitted to direct its own affairs, it hath directed them with reason and intelligence. For this very form of Government obliges the people to learn its true interests, and teaches it to comprehend them, when it is not under the necessity of relying on the knowledge of others. Ignorance is the spring which actuates despotic governments; a general diffusion of knowledge is the soul of states which enjoy liberty. To obey the laws of the former, it is necessary that the people should know nothing; to obey the latter, it is necessary that the people should know every thing.

But when all the different kinds of despotism combine for their reciprocal support, and

for the purpose of abasing the people, which pays them and maintains them, the calumnies where-with they attempt to blacken that great mass rebound upon the very tyrants who insult it. In vain do the priests tell the people, which they have stupified, that the power of the despots is a power divine, and that we must kiss the rod wherewith they are pleased to scourge us : it is well known that they never preach a doctrine like this, but when the despots and themselves are in amity.

The hatred, therefore, which hath been manifested in France against the privileged orders, was founded upon the communication subsisting between them and the Court, which was making every effort to uphold the empire of despotism. The people perceived, that these three ancient powers were supporting one another, with the sole view of crushing it the more easily, and of fattening upon the product of its painful and incessant labours.* But, now that the revolution hath advanced in its career, when the sword hath been released from the scabbard, and the partisans of privileges have proclaimed here and through all Europe, that they were preparing to take signal vengeance for the outrages which they imagined they had received,

* Se nourrir de ses sueurs et de son sang.

the nation hath beheld in them her determined and avowed enemies : the alarmed citizens represented to themselves the horrible proscriptions which would fall upon their heads, should this triple alliance prove victorious. They fancied that they saw Paris red with rivers of plebeian blood ;* that they saw her depopulated ; that scaffolds were erected in all parts of the kingdom ; that the representatives of the people were delivered up to the hand of the executioner : on the contrary, should the nation give a loose to that energy which she had so recently developed, they beheld her plunged in all the misery of civil war, and terminating in anarchy or servitude.

At length, when the privileged orders, no longer relying on their own strength, hurried from one court to another, to summon kings to their assistance, the French considered tyranny with augmented detestation. They were astonished, that seven or eight men or women of Europe should imagine that they had a right to fill France with blood and slaughter, because they were crowned heads. They contrasted the conduct of kings, with whom every pretence is just, for carrying fire and sword amongst their neighbours, with the conduct of a free and upright state, which ranks respect for its neighbours

* Nageant dans le sang.

among

among its first and noblest duties.* They lamented the lot of nations in subjection to the arbitrary will of one man, who is ever disposed to sacrifice the lives of thousands like himself to his wayward and mistaken interests. But the nobles, in particular, were become more and more the objects of their aversion. They considered as traitors to their native land all partisans of privileges, who, dishonouring themselves in order to recover a spurious honour, were looking for nothing less than an opportunity to crush their country, and to deliver her up a prey to all the horrors of civil war. Incapable of trusting to the disinterestedness of kings, they imagined that they saw them concértting to dismember France, and agreeing upon the partition of her empire. They saw Louis XVI., that King whom all good Frenchmen were struggling to sustain against the arts of his pretended adherents, despoiled, perhaps, of his crown, and relinquishing the post of royalty to princes who were playing a more distinguished part than he. They deplored his misfortune of being led astray by perfidious counsels, and of being ignorant that this conspiracy was directed against himself; they saw, with pity, that his advisers sought to avail themselves of his name, for the sole purpose of disguiising their bar-

* Au rang de ses premiers devoirs.

barities, and of reducing him to reign over a desert. The revolution was now justified. The French esteemed it happiness to be disengumbered of such masters, whose menaces and whose vengeance shewed what price should be affixed on the benefits and services of which they loudly vaunted. The value of liberty was felt now more than ever ; she became the idol of every heart ; and the citizens, to a man, were prepared to conquer or to die for her.

The National Assembly, on its part, felt more strongly the necessity of establishing a constitution, which should preserve France, in future, from tyranny of every kind. It published the declaration of the rights of man, and of a citizen, at a juncture when, being as yet not sufficiently confirmed, it knew not whether it should obtain the right of enacting laws upon those principles. It had imparted to the citizens the knowledge of their rights, as a sick father, who suspects that he hath but a little time to live, delivers over to his heir the title deeds of his possessions. Then, by degrees, as time and its own labours had established and justified the authority of the constituting body, it ascertained the civil rights of the citizens, the equality of taxation, of admission to employments, of punishments and of rewards ; it allowed liberty of action, of speech, of writings, of opinions, of religions, and of religious worship,

ship, under the protection of the law, which punishes no wrongs but those done to society, or to individuals. It encompassed each citizen with every precaution which can secure his personal liberty, and protect him from arbitrary proceedings, from the insolence and the vexations of subaltern tyrants, who are frequently more cruel, and always more intolerable, than their principals.

Adopting the maxim of Montesquieu, that a people cannot be free, if the different powers be united in a single hand, it placed the legislative power in the union of the body of the representatives of the people, which dictates, and of the King, who refuses or consents; the executive power in the hands of the Monarch, and in the hands of magistrates elected at stated times by the people. Justices of Peace, appointed in each canton, are there to hear and determine petty causes; tribunals, erected in the several districts, are to decide suits of greater importance. There are to be, in these districts, two degrees of jurisdiction, and an appeal is to lie from one tribunal to the other. A criminal court of judicature is to be established in each department, and the citizens are to be tried by their peers. Lastly, a court of cassation, the authority of which is to extend no farther, than to the deciding on violations of judicial forms, or on the competency

of tribunals, crowns this edifice of legislation; Meanwhile, a high national court, and juries, judge of treasons against the nation; bureaux of conciliation compose family differences; arbitration, open to every citizen, is as the vestibule of the temple of Justice, where Humanity sits for the purpose of restraining and calming the passions; and justice is administered gratuitously.

For the regulation of the national business, it was decreed by the Assembly, that the legislative body should annually ascertain the taxes and the expences; that the King should, by his agents, receive the former, and account for the latter; that, subject to the King's orders, an administration for each department should assess the taxes, receive the revenues, and administer the public business; and that, under its inspection, an administration for each district should execute the King's orders within its peculiar jurisdiction. The police of each town, or community, was entrusted to popular magistrates, elected by the citizens.

The National Assembly, having thus distributed the powers, next regulated their functions, their equilibrium, and their respective limits. It organized a public force, both for internal security, and for a safeguard against foreign invasion. With respect to its connections with the neighbouring nations, while it maintained the existing alliances,

alliances, it declared that it would not engage in any war from a spirit of conquest. A long catalogue of particular laws regulated the whole detail of these constitutional ordinances.

Such was the constitution which the National Assembly was giving to France, notwithstanding the opposition made by several of the privileged party who were members of that body, and the obstacles which daily presented themselves. Not a few are pleased to insist, that this constitution is faulty; but the wonder is, that the National Assembly hath been able to achieve it, composed, as that body was, of two parties unequivocally hostile in their designs. Such as it is, the constituting body, after having established for a principle, that the nation is the sovereign, and that the general will is the law, submits to the inspection of the people, to the experience, to the wisdom, and to the necessities of succeeding generations, the constitution which it hath framed. It hath guarded its work at once from the precipitance of reformation, and from that indolence which permits the growth and the accumulation of abuses.

The consolidation of the public debt was also the object of its cares. It had rejected with abhorrence every proposal that aimed at bankruptcy, which, under the pretext of liquidating the nation's debts in a single day, would have

over-

overwhelmed her with ignominy, without saving her from the mischiefs which attend all partial bankruptcies, and from the universal ruin which such mischiefs would have caused. It had given as a security to the creditors of the public, the ecclesiastical estates and the domains of the crown, valued at many hundred millions. As a compensation to the clergy, the Assembly had assigned upon the public revenues, as well the provision for the ecclesiastics employed in the sacred ministry, as the pensions of the ecclesiastics of the suppressed religious orders. The sum amounted to more than one hundred and fifty millions a year ; but the pensions were to expire * successively by the death of the respective pensioners. It, moreover, charged the nation with the reimbursement of the holders of that multitude of employments and offices, of which we have made mention at the beginning of this history, and which could no longer subsist after the suppression of the sale of offices. The Assembly ordered that that compensation should be effected by degrees. Twelve hundred millions of *assignats* upon the national property proved sufficient for this repayment, whether the claimants should be inclined to acquire that species of property, or

* Diminuer.

should

should prefer keeping the *assignats*, in order to circulate them as money.

The Assembly was also occupied in the reformation of the revenues. It had abolished certain imposts become odious to the people, on account of the vexations that attended their collection, which last was, moreover, extremely complicated and expensive. It adopted the noble idea of disburthening the kingdom of all those inconvenient and vexatious tolls, which interrupt the traveller at every gate of every town, and upon every highway. The land of France was to be free. There were no more provinces in that land, and the kingdom was consolidated. It was the will of the Assembly, that the products of the earth and of industry should henceforth enjoy an unlimited circulation, and that the traveller should no longer be tormented on his journey by inquisitorial searches, nor the citizen in his house, by the intrusive visits of the revenue-officer. These officers, therefore, were removed to the frontiers, there to receive the duties upon the merchandize of foreign countries. And for these commodities a tarif was ordained.

The abolition of these oppressive imposts left a vast void in the finances, and this void it was now necessary to fill up. At the same time it was necessary to substitute a mode of taxation, which

which might suffice for expences that were considerable, although reduced, and which might not alarm the people, naturally inclined to complain of taxes, of what kind soever they be. The Assembly established a land-tax, a tax on personal property, a duty upon patents granted for new inventions in the arts of industry, a stamp-duty upon paper and parchment, and upon the registry of deeds and other legal instruments. But the delay, unavoidable in the construction of this plan, and particularly in its execution, in the creation of offices, in the appointing to employments, in the formation of registers, and in the assessment of the imposts, retarded the receipt of these several contributions. Nor were there wanting other circumstances, unfavourable to dispatch. The persons who had been long in possession of those employments, perceiving, but too plainly, that they themselves should be dismissed, no longer attended to any thing but their own private interests ; they neglected to levy imposts which the Assembly had ordained, and were sometimes induced to hope, that these artful delays would either obstruct or destroy the movements of this new machine. The directories, overburthened with business, were unable to accelerate what related to the taxes. The discontent of the citizens, in some places, gave frequent interruption to the administrators. The evil-

evil-minded took a pleasure in proclaiming to the people, that it would be obliged to pay more taxes than it had ever paid before ; and although the contrary was evident to those who could embrace, with a single glance, the entire system of the Assembly, yet they favoured the delusion amongst that class of the people, which, at all times, would very willingly be excused from paying any thing. Lastly, several administrators, who had quitted the old for the new method, brought with them into that method sufficient ill-will or negligence for retarding the operations which were entrusted to their management. The taxes were in arrear. The nation gave little and spent much. The mal-contents and the emigrants laid her under the necessity of incurring the expence of armaments, in order to put herself in a posture of defence. They contrived a scarcity of specie, or carried it out of the kingdom, in order to exhaust the nation, and thus rendered the payment of the taxes more difficult. The balance of our trade with foreigners was against us ; and as the interest of our debt to them must unavoidably be paid, the specie went out of the kingdom, and did not return ; exchange rose high, and the citizens became embarrassed in their transactions. The nation, uneasy, but not affrighted at this situation, consoled herself with reflecting, that her

immense estates would remedy these transitory losses : she supplied the deficiency of that species, which was flying from her, by small *assignats*, which could not quit the kingdom. The government yet unsettled, the ministry in suspense, and urged in contrary directions by the Assembly and the Court, the Court itself determined to overturn the new government, all obstructed, by their sentiments but too well known, the establishment of the new order of things. This interregnum was a chaos. The contest between privileges and the public good, still subsisted, and the general movement was suspended while the combatants were engaged.

In reality, history presents us with no example of an internal revolution like that which France hath just experienced. It proceeded on a single principle, the reformation of abuses. But as every thing was an abuse in this empire, the result was, that every thing was changed. In displacing things, it became necessary to displace persons ; and the constitution caused those to vanish, who were the actors in the first scene, in order to bring forward other performers. The complaints and outcries of the former were grounded upon the loss of the grandeur which they had enjoyed : they never considered, that, as they themselves were identified with the abuse, the law, which suppressed the abuse, was unable to

pre-

preserve the person, or that, if it preserved the person, it must necessarily permit the abuse. Each body allowed the necessity for reforming all the rest, and affected the merit of respectability ; but when they saw themselves attacked successively, they desired to make a common cause : their battles, however, were no more than skirmishes, and their partial acts of vengeance, and their partial intrigues, produced nothing but confusion, though they aimed at a restoration, which was now become impracticable. In creating general mischief, without advantage to themselves, they served the cause of the people, and justified the revolution. The absurdity of their coalition was particularly striking, when they vociferously called for bankruptcy, by which evil they would have lost more than any, since not one of them would ever have been paid. They were every one either creditors or pensioners of the state ; but they lamented that they could no longer be its masters. And what is worthy of being remarked, is, that the nation, which paid several hundred millions of debts, was contented, while they whom she was paying were dissatisfied. The reason of this is plain ; they were wishing to be powerful, and she wished to be free.

Prejudices and the passions possess a terrible ascendancy over men, since they frequently betray

tray them into judgements which are contrary to evidence, or contrary to their own interests.* The French nation was averse to bankruptcy, and her own creditors were urging her to declare herself bankrupt. It is beyond all question that, only for the States-General, such a mischief would have ensued, and the enemies of the people accordingly cursed the States-General. The clergy had asserted, that it possessed no more than one hundred and thirty millions of revenue, and complained of the nation, who was providing it with one hundred and sixty millions. She was paying off several hundred millions to patentees and other claimants, while these claimants were regretting the old order of things, which would have ended with not paying them a livre. Attempts were made to inflame foreigners against the National Assembly, while the National Assembly was securing to them the principal and the interest of an enormous debt. They all clamoured for the old government, which would unquestionably have ruined them, with an exception, perhaps, in favour of the clergy, a body accustomed to extricate itself from any difficulty. Indeed, the King of Prussia predicted, thirty years ago, that

* We know of one other party, to which this observation is very applicable.

the prodigality of the court of France would induce it to seize the property of the clergy, in order to pay the King's debts : but no king would have had sufficient power for such an enterprize.

France meanwhile presented herself to spectators, and to foreigners travelling through her territory, under a far different aspect from that which she had formerly displayed ; there, every thing had undergone alteration. That court, once so magnificent, was instantaneously eclipsed, and the castle of Versailles was abandoned. That multitude of titled pensioners, who besieged the throne in order to exhaust the treasury, had vanished. Certain youthful persons, half courtiers and half warriors, had yielded up their station to obscure plebeians. No more peers, no more dukes, no more marquises, were to be seen, no more counts nor barons, and titles were already become ridiculous.

The parliaments, those tutors and rivals of the royal power, had utterly disappeared ; their existence was scarce remembered, although sometimes it was said, that they fancied themselves still existing. All the other courts of judicature were likewise suppressed ; and that swarm of men of the law who overspread and devoured France, had now rejoined the general

mass of the citizens ; their very robe was become extinct.

In the provinces, the governors, the commandants, the officers of the *état-major*, the intendants, the sub-delegates, the presidents, and the tribunals of election, had been abolished ; their places were supplied by elective administrators. No more mayors, no more *échevins* were to be seen, no more *capitouls*, no more *jurats*, no more *consuls* : elective magistrates of the municipalities had occupied their stations. The courts of aids, the chambers of accounts, the treasurers, the generals of the finance, the chanceries, the bureaux of finance, had equally disappeared : a simple and general responsibility had been established upon the prodigious ruins of these complicated offices.

Those vast bodies, known by the appellation of Provincial States, in which the ancient privileges of provinces united to the empire had become the patrimony of a few individuals, were melted down into the great and undivided mass of the nation.* Provinces were now no more ; their very names had been sacrificed as a prejudice : they are already forgotten, and our children shall study them but in history. The Atlas of France was become useless, for her geography had been totally changed. To

* Dans l'unité nationale.

the party-coloured confusion of bailiwicks, of seneschalties, of elections, of generalities, of dioceses, of parliamentary jurisdictions, of military governments, and of so many fantastic intricacies, which had successively accumulated that chaos of rights, of privileges, of languages, of customs, of communities, of acquisitions ; to all this confusion, the study alone of which was become an extensive science, had succeeded a division characterised by simplicity and uniformity. France was become the kingdom of the eighty-three departments ; and Corsica herself, separated from us by her language and by the sea, seemed to draw nearer to us, in order to be incorporated with our empire.

In the church, a system equally simple had induced us to diminish the number of the bishoprics, the extent of which, moreover, was unequal : one was allotted to every department. The useless parishes were suppressed, and those which were of real utility were augmented. The ecclesiastical dues, however, were abolished, in consequence of the sacrifice made by the ministers themselves. The priests were all become stipendiary pastors.* The useless eccle-

* It is to be wished that they were so every where. Tithes are a perpetual source of vexation to the husbandman, and of discord and hatred between the parson and his flock ; consequently they are injurious to the cause of true religion.

siastics were no more. The church had her presbyteries, and her houses for the bishops and the parish-ministers ; no more palaces were to be seen, no more equipages, no more high-sounding titles.*

In the army, the pay of the soldiers was increased ; the private soldiers could ascend through all the degrees of rank without exception ; it was no longer requisite for the officers to exhibit proofs of their nobility, instead of proofs of service. The discipline was in conformity to the new laws, and to the new manners of the empire : arbitrary punishments and humiliating penalties were at length abolished ; the soldier was tried by his peers. Promotion, and a comfortable provision for life, were assured to such as had grown old in the military profession, or had been wounded in the defence of their country. The soldier, become a citizen, after having assumed that character, must of course assume the virtues which belong to it.

In the rural parts of the kingdom, the citizens were set free from the slavery of the feudal system : they were delivered from tithe, which, in one half of the kingdom, conferred upon the clergy the third of the net revenue of the produce of the earth, and the fourth or the fifth

* Bravo !

elsewhere ;

elsewhere ; they were delivered also from the *gabelle*, which, by setting an excessive price upon the cheapest of all necessaries, occasioned every year a mournful frequency of punishments.* The lands, the cultivation, the harvests, and the husbandmen, were now become free ; a rural code, replete with wisdom, placed property under the safe-guard of the law. Justice administered with facility, and day by day, and without fee or recompence, decided every difference ; the administration and the assessment of the taxes were under the eyes of the persons taxed, who had it in their power to oversee the proceedings of these offices. It was evident to all, that the happiness of the rural districts had been the principal object of the National Assembly, since they are the nurses of the state, since the earth, which annually produces and reproduces, ought to be free in order that she may be fruitful.† Accordingly, many citizens who, by the change wrought in our manners, were undeceived as to the happiness of dwelling in the towns, relapsed into the sentiments of nature, and felicitated themselves on the idea of becoming inhabitants of the country.

* Une multitude de supplices.

† Doit être libre et fécondée.

Lastly, the surface of France was covered with men armed with muskets, with cannon, and arrayed in uniforms ; a great number of societies, composed of citizens, were assembling in all quarters, in order to pay attention to the public weal, and to repulse the local invasions to which it was exposed. *Tribunes* erected in every town and city, incessantly resounded with the delicious voice of liberty.* It was no longer France degraded in the eyes of Europe, oppressed by a long chain of powers, the primary link of which was the Court ; it was a people combating against the ancient laws, and hurrying to embrace the altar of the new constitution.

But a mighty conflict was commenced between the old and the new government. On the one side were marshalled the court and the partisans of privilege, and on the other the nation, each of the two parties reproaching its opponent with the efforts made to bear away the victory. The Court, artful in its intrigues ; the nobles, violent in their movements ; the clergy,

* *Les accens de la liberté.*—I am here obliged, as I have been in other places, to make use of the French word *tribune*. We have, I imagine, no English term, by which this word can be properly translated : *pulpit* hath been exclusively consecrated to the eloquence of the church. *Tribune* is, however, a troublesome expression, as it interferes with another word spelt exactly in the same manner, and which we all know, signifies a certain magistrate of the ancient Romans,

treacherous

treacherous in its suggestions ; the partisans of privileges, declaiming against the new laws, were all invoking the aid of Heaven, which they said had suffered outrage ; of the throne, which they said had been abased ; of the ancient abuses, which they called the majesty of the laws. The people, elevated in its passions, penetrating in its conjectures, rapid in its motions, prompt and sometimes cruel in its revenge, employed such means as are in the power of the multitude. Each availed himself of the weapons which were peculiar to him.

For this year past, however, the contest hath assumed a new face ; and, whereas the privileged party stood at first on the defensive, it was now presenting itself in the character of an assailant. In this new kind of warfare, they possessed the advantage of wealth, of a remnant of grandeur, of an inveterate habit of intrigue, the facility of exploring resources in every court of Europe, and that sort of superiority which belongs to those who attack, and whose *designs* are deep and hidden. The people had to boast its vast mass of resistance, against which every attempt was shattered ; its abrupt insurrections, which disconcerted plots and stratagems just ripe for execution ; and a majority in the National Assembly, which disarranged every project by a decree.

One may judge, by the resistance made by the partisans of privileges, of the prodigious power which they possessed within the kingdom. A combination of two hundred thousand men proved an obstacle to the efforts of six and twenty millions, and the general will was suspended by the operation of particular interests. In the army, they had almost every one of the officers, men whose privilege it was hitherto to command those of plebeian origin ; in the church, a great majority of the ministers of parishes, impregnated with the *esprit de corps*, and in subjection to their noble bishops ; in the finances, the farmers of the revenue, and the entire host of their dependents ; in the fortified towns, those who had the command thereof ; in the several commercial cities, they could depend upon the opulent, whose fortunes had enabled them to ape the grandees, who condescended to admit them into their company ; in the profession of the law, they had almost every one of those who had received a compensation for their suppressed posts and dignities ; throughout the kingdom, those whose situations or character induced them to hold the people in contempt.* Each of these several descriptions of

* Foreigners frequently ask what is meant in France, by *Aristocrates* : they are the very persons whom I have been just describing.—*Note of M. Rabaut de Saint-Etienne.*

men endeavoured to gain over such of the citizens, as its credit or the different prejudices enabled it to influence.

From these exertions of the friends to privilege, sprung those partial attempts against liberty in the internal parts of the kingdom, which attempts usually terminated in the effusion of blood ; for it is an undoubted fact, that the privileged party hath, by its conspiracies, occasioned infinitely more bloodshed, than the people by its revenge. The officers endeavoured to create divisions amongst the soldiers, or to oppose them to the citizens, or to disgust them with the civil authority : they imagined, that military despotism must prove agreeable to men, who are proud of the arms which have been entrusted to them. They inflicted marks of disgrace upon such of the subalterns and soldiers, as embarrassed them with their unseasonable patriotism ; and this they did with a view of disposing others to compliance. On the other hand, the soldiers, misled by extravagant suggestions, or by their hatred to their chiefs, disregarded the laws of discipline, and drove away their officers. These disturbances were most prevalent in the frontier provinces, in Flanders, in Alsace, in Lorrain, in Rouffillon ; as the neighbourhood of the emigrants inflamed two opposite passions,

patriotism

patriotism in the soldiery, and indignation in the officers.

The ecclesiastics, on their part, continued forming amongst themselves that prodigious combination, the surest, the strongest, and the most easily formed of any, because they also have their discipline, their uniform, their tactics, their stratagems, their watch-word ; because they influence the human mind by the most powerful of all prejudices, and their troops are more devoted to them, than soldiers are to the most able and most authoritative general. They told the people that religion was undone. Hence were acted, in the southern provinces, those tragic scenes, which repictured to our eyes all the horrors of the crusades.

Paris was the center of all these different commotions. The National Assembly and the Court maintained a constant opposition ; and, although the King, sooner or later, gave his sanction to the decrees, the intentions and the intrigues of his advisers were no secret. From Paris issued those plain and uniform plans of government, which were distributed through all the departments. The patriotic deputies had formed a society, where they previously discussed the decrees of the National Assembly. They met at the Jacobins ; and as they afterwards admitted citizens of every class, with a view of forming the pub-

lic mind, this society obtained a superior degree of influence, and a multitude of other societies maintained a correspondence with it. The friends of privileges, on their side, likewise instituted societies, one while under the name of *Impartial*, though their political inactivity was a real partiality, since its object was to avoid making any progress; and another while under the title of the *Monarchical Club*. These last, more undisguised, made no attempt to conceal their hatred; the King's name served them for a pretext, and the only instance of artifice observable in their conduct was, when they opened offices for the purpose of selling bread at one *sous*; but the people perceived their cunning, and refused to take their bread. They revenged themselves for this, by calling the Jacobins *regicides*: they believed, that a king who is not despotic, is a king defunct.

The Châtelet, which still existed, became one of the chief hopes of this party. That tribunal had been commissioned, as we have said in a former part of this history, by the National Assembly, to take examinations concerning the outrages committed at the castle of Versailles, on the 6th of October, 1789. Under pretence of inquiring into the circumstances and consequences of that affair, the Châtelet endeavoured to insinuate, that M. d'Orleans and M. de Mirabeau

mirabeau had intended to procure the assassination of the Queen ; and it collected every proof which it could possibly obtain, in order to accomplish its purpose. It received the depositions of the members of the right side of the Assembly, against the members who belonged to the left ; and, availing itself of all the latitude which the facility of informing gave to it, it received a multitude of depositions, put together with sufficient art to present to inconsiderate minds, a phantom of a plot against the Court. Great was the outcry raised, at first, by this tribunal, in the hope of intimidating the patriots of the Assembly, who were themselves well inclined to sacrifice such members of their own body, as might have been found guilty upon this occasion.

But this intrigue of the Châtelet redounded to the confusion of the very authors of it ; that tribunal at length issued decrees against certain persons ; "Behold," said the Châtelet to the National Assembly, "this mystery, so full of horror, is unravelled : the criminals are fitting amongst yourselves." A question was then put to the Assembly, whether the inviolability of the deputies screened M. d'Orleans and M. de Mirabeau from prosecution ? The speakers who delivered their sentiments on this occasion,

sion, declared, that each member would look on such a privilege with horror.

Meanwhile the proceedings of the Châtelet were printed : they were read by all the citizens ; and the surprise of the latter was equal to their indignation. The public had passed sentence on the information, before the National Assembly could bestow attention on it. The public said, that the Châtelet, in printing the information against what had passed on the 5th day of October, when its commission extended no farther than to inform against what had been done upon the 6th, was, in fact, accusing all Paris, which had been that day at Versailles ; that it was prosecuting the Revolution, and that its design was to dishonour that ever-glorious event ; that it was endeavouring to represent the generous emotions of a capital, incensed at the plot for conveying the King away to Metz, as a revolt and an assassination, directed by some distinguished members of the National Assembly ; that it was endeavouring to deceive the King, and to excite the pity of all Europe for his situation, by representing him as on the point of being dethroned by M. d'Orleans ; that that was what the emigrants, and the partisans of privileges, were every where reporting ; that the Châtelet, impowered to make inquiries in whatever sense it pleased, had attended to no depo-

depositions, but such as seemed conducive to the design which it had at heart ; that it had collected them, for the most part, amongst such of the deputies as were known to be in the interests of the Court ; that it had rejected the depositions which would have counteracted its views ; that, notwithstanding this train of artifice, and the three hundred and eighty-eight witnesses whom it had thought proper to hear, there resulted nothing which could criminate M. d'Orleans and M. de Mirabeau ; that it had taken special care not to make any inquiries concerning the orgies of Versailles and the white cockade, the real causes of the Parisian insurrection, nor concerning the traitorous hands which had contrived a famine for the capital, nor concerning the design of carrying the King away to Metz, for the purpose of originating and promoting a civil war ; that these were the acts of treason committed against the nation, which an impartial court of justice should have prosecuted.

This procedure, printed and dispersed through every quarter, served to convince men that there had been no plot against the royal family, since, notwithstanding so many artifices, the Châtelet had not been able to discover any. And, when the report of the proceedings was made to the National Assembly, it declared, that there was no ground for accusation against M. d'Orleans and

and M. de Mirabeau.* Universal applause was bestowed on these terrible words of the latter :—
 “ Yes, the secret of this infernal procedure is at length brought to light : it is there entirely,” (pointing to the right side of the Assembly, where the friends of privileges were seated) ; “ it is to be found in the designs of those, who thought “ to obtain an opportunity of signalizing their “ horrible resentment ; it is to be found in the “ iniquity of the Judges, who have rendered “ themselves criminal by this infamous attempt ; “ it is there altogether, such as it will be engraved “ upon the faithful page of history, by the most “ just and most implacable vengeance.” After the judgement pronounced in this affair, no further inquiries were instituted, and this new conspiracy terminated as contemptibly † as the rest.

While the partisans of privileges were thus employing, internally, all the means in their power to create dissensions in the kingdom, they were laying schemes, in foreign countries, to invade her. Their dependence was upon the

* “ That man so calumniated, so hated, so adored ; that man so justly celebrated on this single account, that he could at once merit calumny, hatred, and adoration.”— See an Extract from the Preliminary Discourse of his editor, M. *Mejan*, in the Preface to the first volume of his Translated Speeches.

† S'évanouit en fumée.

want of discipline in the troops, upon the disaffection of the officers, upon the good wishes of some directories, and of some municipalities, upon the associations of all the gentry, who were to assemble at appointed places, upon the secret intelligence with the ministry, upon the fanatical disturbances existing in certain villages, upon the levies made at Paris and in all parts of the kingdom, and upon the preparations made at Metz and its neighbourhood, for bringing into action the troops of the Emperor, and those of the King of Prussia.

Abroad, all the cabinets of Europe were solicited to unite their forces against France. These propositions met with a favourable reception, whether it be that all courts have a natural antipathy to the word *liberty*, or that they imagined that they should thereby gratify the Monarch of the French, or that they discovered some advantage, either present or future, in preventing France from towering to the happy destiny which she merited ; for it is the false policy of modern cabinets, ever at war amongst themselves, to suppose that they are powerful only in proportion as other nations are weak : the adversity of others becomes their prosperity.* This

* The reader who wishes to see this point ably discussed, will do well to consult a little tract of M. Fenelon, Archbishop of Cambray, entitled, *Proper Heads for the Self-examination of a King.*

intrigue

intrigue was assisted by our ambassadors ; the gold of France, who always paid them nobly, served to excite a war against her. The princes and the pensioned fugitives were regularly paid, and they received to the amount of many millions.

The feudal phrenzy * had infected almost all the noble heads in Europe ; and this French disease was more real and more contagious, than the democratic malady of which the nation was accused. The books and newspapers of both parties flew to the extremities of Christendom, but with this difference, that courts permitted a free entrance to no productions, but such as appeared to favour their own royal ideas. The emigrants were the only persons listened to ; but their presence, by giving rise to reflections in the minds of foreigners who listened to them, redoubled the uneasiness of the great and powerful men of the country ; it led them to consider of the necessity for that league, which they erroneously imagined was to effect their own security. The celebrated balance of Europe seemed on the point of being disorganized ; and whereas, formerly, all the crowned heads united against that state, which was considered as the strongest, they, at the present day, were entering into a general combination against that which appeared the most feeble. By firmly fixing the King of

* *Le vertige féodal.*

the French upon the throne of despotism, they thought that they were, to a certainty, disabling France from giving them umbrage, be the issue of their exertions what it might. But their alliance, by altering all their connections and their differences, gave birth to embarrassments in their future politics, much greater than that occasioned by their present situation. In fact, France is of such importance in the equilibrium of Europe, that her destruction would have disarranged their whole system. And, though they should even have accomplished the partition of France amongst them, a measure which it is thought was proposed to them, they could not know what might be the result of a partition so difficult to be executed, and of a general war which would be kindled by it; for never have wars of alliance ended agreeably to the hopes of the allies.

It would have been a policy more frank, and, above all, more sure, to leave France at liberty to accomplish her revolution with the impetuosity peculiar to the nation, and to temper it at home, by means adapted to a more phlegmatic race of men. But this species of policy is not the policy of kings, and the whole skill of ministers of state consists in issuing easy orders for the levying men and money, and for killing. The powerful believe that they have a dispensation

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tion for being unwise. If particular revolutions become general, it is only from this universal infatuation of the great, and even of entire nations, which have precipitately followed their example. The emigrants, by spreading themselves over the face of Europe, would have introduced revolution every where, had Europe adopted the plan of their crusade.

To this she manifested a strong inclination. Germany, forgetful of her internal equilibrium, seemed to sacrifice the sole power which can maintain it. Spain, already incapable of bestowing prosperity * upon her share of the two worlds, contributed a little money, and a small number of troops : but her dependence was upon the spiritual forces of Rome, and upon the religious abhorrence of the Spaniards. She forgot that, in the hour of our evident distress, we had fitted out forty-five ships for her assistance. The King of Sardinia, able to do but little, hazarding little, hoping little, limited his prospects to one of those trivial augmentations, which have successively been the objects of the policy of that crown. The south of Europe was raving of a religious war, and anathematized, in the mean while, the journals and gazettes of France. Prussia, whose interest it was, at least for the moment, to support France as a counterpoise to

* A faire fleurir.

Austria, kept her secret undivulged, was able to do much, promised little, but still did not disarm her legions. The Empress of Russia quitted the Turks, who had been almost her sure prey, and sacrificed objects in the east which were certain, in order to trouble the west, and turn her views to that Mediterranean which it was inconvenient for her to enter by the straits of Gibraltar. The Emperor, embarrassed by dominions which are situated so far asunder, and which are ever on the point of disclaiming his authority, saw, in Louis XVI., all-powerful, a mighty bulwark against the Belgic provinces, but who, for this long while, hath been incapable of assisting him. One might have said, that the Emperor of Germany was in want of occupation, he was so ready to intermeddle in the affairs of others, without considering how he was to extricate himself from such difficulties. In England, the nation whose interest it now is to ally herself with France, and who, it is to be feared, hath turned her thoughts to that alliance when it is too late, the nation appeared satisfied at beholding the birth and the growth of a free people, while the ministry seemed intent upon obstructing them. Pitt was arming and disarming; equipping fleets, and reviewing them; furnishing matter for thinking more than he himself was thinking of; making a gallant parade

parade of his navy, and losing the East Indies.* Switzerland, of whom France, whether free or in slavery, is the natural ally, seemed to listen to the suggestions of foreigners, and to form new connections, all of which were more remote and less useful to her than we were. Some ecclesiastical potentates, scattered along the Rhine, were imploring religion, the Imperial globe, the diet of Ratisbon, and the thunders of the see of Rome, to save their tithes from annihilation. They afforded an asylum to the enemies of France, maltreated such Frenchmen as travelled into their territories, and instructed the emigrants in the Prussian and Hessian exercise. They insulted over France, as children would torment a sick giant. Every route was thronged with couriers hurrying from Petersburgh and Venice, even to Rome and to Madrid. The universal league was proclaimed in every quarter; and the Monarch of the Swedes, issuing from his kingdom of lakes and frosts, was to become the Agamemnon of the confederacy.*

During this general bustle, which was exaggerated by the friends of privileges, the revolution of France was rising in the esteem of other nations, precisely because every crowned head in

* Is this last assertion, relative to the East Indies, a true one?

† Devoit en être le chef.

Christendom imagined that he had an interest in opposing it. Such a clamour amounted to an eulogium : and yet France, without specie, without allies, without support, had not vanished from the face of the globe, as Burke said in the senate of England, but she stood alone ; and she is, perhaps, the only nation in Europe, which, at one and the same instant, hath been abandoned by all the rest.

Some transactions, which were in a manner foreign to the affairs of France, added, nevertheless, to her solicitude. The districts of Avignon and the Comtat, interwoven with the kingdom, and formerly appendages of the county of Provence, but alienated to the Pope by a princess then a minor, and besieged, and who, when she attained her majority, protested against this alienation ; the districts of Avignon and the Comtat felt a desire to become free. They resolved to effect a junction with the French empire, of which Provence formed a portion. Our kings had frequently resumed them, and as frequently restored them, but always with a reservation of their royal rights. The National Assembly was solicited by these districts to incorporate them with the empire of France ; and for a long time the Assembly refused to grant their requisition, reserving, nevertheless, the rights of the nation. But these districts, without rulers, without judges,

I without

without any executive power, soon saw themselves reduced to a state of disorganization. The inhabitants became divided into parties, and this delightful territory experienced the horrors of a civil war. France, the natural protectress of these deserted neighbours, whom she had considered in the light of fellow-citizens, afforded them but the feeble succour of an ill-supported authority. And now, dreadful were the ravages committed in those districts ; the departments in that vicinity took an interest in the quarrel, and the war of the Comtat became a national war, on account of the fanaticism which appeared in it. Upon this, the National Assembly united those districts to the French empire, and offered a suitable indemnification to the Pope. I can find there nothing but a country ruined for a long time to come, a considerable debt, the property of the church dissipated, and lands reduced to desolation : but, however, it smothered the flames of civil discord in the south.

The colonies, which are connected with France by precious ties, and which contribute to her prosperity, were an object much more interesting. But the revolution was to prove afflicting both to the mother-country and the colonies. Privileges were the cause of these calamities, and the premature pretension of the people of colour, joined to the unseasonable pride of the whites,

proved the ruin of the superb colony of San Domingo. The Mulatto, or free man of colour, is the offspring of a white man and a negro woman : these Mulattoes have obtained the gift of freedom from their fathers, and are, for the most part, proprietors. As the race is propagated, their complexion becomes clear, and they multiply in a much greater degree than the whites, who, besides, indulge the hope of returning to their native country. So abject was their condition, that the white father would not eat at the same table with his coloured son. This prejudice took its rise from the circumstance of the mulattoes being partly of slavish origin ; and the prejudice was supported by policy ; for the whites being to the blacks but in the proportion of one to ten, they unceasingly endeavoured to instil into the latter an opinion that the whites were a race of superior beings, whom Heaven had appointed to command the race of blacks. They had considered it as necessary, or as soothing to their pride, to extend this disdainful treatment to the men of colour, although free, because there are also some amongst them who are slaves.

At the first news of the revolution of France, the colonies gave a loose to joy, which was by so much the more lively, as they were suffering, still more than the mother country, from the rod of despotism. But ere long the word *liberty*, so little known

known in those climates, introduced there confusion and dissensions. The name of citizen excited in the men of colour, whose forbearance was exhausted by contempt, the desire of obtaining the right of citizenship. The whites took the alarm ; and their alarm was increased by the apprehension that the black slaves, and the mulattoes who were not free, would likewise demand their liberty, their unacquaintance with which would betray them to make an inhuman use of it, and to bring destruction upon the colony. This apprehension was confirmed by the accounts frequently received of a society of friends to the blacks, which had been instituted in France, a society that wished to extend the blessings of freedom to these Africans, but the principles of which had been exaggerated.

The free people of colour sent a deputation to France, for the purpose of requiring that they should be put upon an equality with the whites ; and the latter entered into a combination to defeat the object of this enterprize. These dissensions, long continued, and transmitted from one hemisphere to the other, exasperated minds that were but too easily inflamed beneath the burning sky of the West Indies. The National Assembly, deeply intent upon this question, which it could not possibly decline, was at the same time engaged in restraining within the bounds of duty a colo-

colonial assembly, which aspired to be independent of the mother-country, and which the governor, appointed by the King, had been at length under the necessity of dissolving. The National Assembly, however, declared, that the French constitution was not adapted to the colonies, as their situation required a particular form of government ; that such government should not be given to them, without previously consulting their inclinations ; and that the Assembly should not decide, with respect to the condition of any of the colonists, unless upon their precise and formal requisition. Fortunate had it been, both for the colonies and the mother-country, if the Assembly had immediately dispatched commissioners to the West Indies ; a measure which was not decreed till four months after, and which was not carried into execution. Some people of colour, headed by one of the deputies who had been sent to France, and whose name was Ogé, attempted an insurrection : but they were routed, and Ogé fled for refuge to the Spaniards of San Domingo, who gave him up to his pursuers. He was broken upon the wheel. This hurricane was apparently succeeded by a calm ; but the hatred of the two parties still existed.

Some troops had been sent out to the colony ; but they introduced with them thither that dislike to subordination, which was prevalent in France, and

and the artful suggestions of foreigners. A regiment on the island, called the regiment of Port-au-prince, inspired with these principles, which it carried to an extreme, and, spurred on by the enemies of the officers, assassinated its own colonel. But ere long this disorderly battalion was surrounded, embarked, and sent back to Europe. The civil powers were disorganized ; municipalities were formed ; and the governors for the king possessed but a disputed and suspected authority.

Together with one of its decrees, the National Assembly had sent out instructions, one article of which proved a source of farther discord. The purport of it was, that all persons who had attained the age of twenty-five years should associate for the purpose of forming parochial assemblies. The men of colour not being excepted from this law, which summoned all persons, insisted that they were comprehended in it. This became also a subject of debate in the National Assembly, when that body was framing a law, which should provide the colonies with a medium for legally communicating their wishes to the mother-country, by instituting a colonial assembly. The defenders of the people of colour, adducing motives drawn both from reason and from justice, asserted that the National Assembly had already conferred, in its instructions, the rights of active

active citizens on men of colour who were free. The debates upon this question were very long and very animated. The deputies and partisans of the white colonists confessed, that the prejudice against the men of colour was absurd and unjust; but they maintained, that it could not be destroyed in a single day by virtue of a decree of the Assembly; that the alteration must be the fruit of time, and of their own attention; and that a law which, on a sudden, should lift those men of colour to the level of the whites, would expose the colonies to the most dreadful calamities. The Assembly perceived that, whatever might be the nature of the law which it should enact, it must infallibly incur the hatred, and perhaps the vengeance, of one of the two parties, each of which would have two hundred thousand negroes for its auxiliaries; and that the mad rage of both sides would prove equally destructive. It was, furthermore, affected by the spirit of independence, that had reigned in the General Assembly, which had even opened its ports to foreigners, as well as with the threats which had been thrown out by several whites, of delivering up the colony to England. The Assembly saw the colonies ready to separate from the mother-country, be its ordinances what they might. In this embarrassing situation, and possessing neither the means of force, since it durst not send any troops

troops thither, lest they should be corrupted by the colonists, nor the means of persuasion, since its commissioners had not set out, it leaned at length to the side of justice: it passed, on the 15th of May, a decree in which it established regulations, both with respect to those who were not free, and with respect to those who were. It decreed, with respect to the former, that no law, relative to the condition of persons not free, could be enacted by the legislative body, unless upon the spontaneous and formal requisition of the colonial assemblies. It ordained, with respect to the latter, that men of colour, born of free fathers and free mothers, should be admitted into all the assemblies; and that, as to those not born of free fathers and free mothers, the legislative body should not determine their political condition, unless upon the previous desire of the colonies, spontaneously and freely expressed.

This decree, when it arrived at San Domingo, is said to have proved agreeable to neither party. The men of colour were not satisfied, as they are, for the most part, not born of free fathers and free mothers. The whites were still apprehensive, from the intelligence which they received from Europe, that the Assembly would one day restore liberty to the blacks. The most violent hatred subsisted between the whites and the people of colour. In France, every thing

impeded the success of the new law. The white colonists had immediately sent it back by a swift vessel, and had considerably got the start of the official messenger. The slowness of the operations, and the weakness of a suspended government, prevented the departure of the commissioners, who were appointed to carry out the instructions, which might have restored peace and concord to the colony. No forces were sent to support the new law of the National Assembly and the commissioners, when almost ready to depart, unexpectedly resigned their commissions.

Meanwhile, intelligence still more alarming arrived from San Domingo. All declared, that it was impossible to execute the law, and that the colony was exposed to the most terrible calamities. Upon this, the Assembly framed a decree which should remedy the inconveniences complained of in the former; but it was now too late; the hand of perfidy had broken the chains of the blacks, who had been provided with arms and ammunition; certain chiefs in disguise led them to battle, or rather to massacre. They ravaged the country to the extent of fifteen leagues, and committed the most horrible barbarities upon the whites. These events are so recent, that it is impossible to give a faithful relation of them; but history will one day

day inform us who the traitors were that contrived this perfidious and sanguinary rebellion.

While the Assembly was discussing and re-discussing these grand questions, it passed a multitude of laws both administrative and judiciary, and terminated, by decrees, a prodigious number of dissensions and disturbances, which party-spirit was exciting and fomenting in divers places. At the same time, it erected a monument to the memory of such men as have merited the gratitude of their country. That eloquent defender of Liberty, Mirabeau, paid nature her last debt, when he had just attained the pinnacle of glory, and was lamented by both parties; his death was a public calamity. The National Assembly declared him deserving of the honours decreed by the nation to the memory of great men. His obsequies were performed with a pomp worthy of the grandeur of his character, and his remains were deposited in the new church of Saint Géneviéve, now become the French Pantheon.* Accordingly, this temple hath since become the repository of

* They were previously deposited in the vault of the old church, beside the body of *Descartes*, until the new edifice should be prepared for their reception. See the debate relative to the funeral honours of *Mirabeau*, and an affecting account of his obsequies, at the end of the second volume of his translated speeches.

the ashes of Voltaire, whose genius had produced and cherished the tender buds of infant liberty; and dispelled the thick darkness with which Europe had been enveloped. Jean Jacques Rousseau was judged worthy of the same honours: the Assembly had already decreed that a statue should be erected to him. The gardens of Ermenonville preserved his cold remains; a cenotaph is to consecrate, to future times, his memory and the gratitude of Frenchmen.

While the Assembly was thus employed in raising monuments to the apostles of liberty, and was enacting laws which were to establish her on a durable foundation, despotism was occupied in repairing her broken chains. The neighbouring potentates, under various pretences, were stationing their troops nearer and nearer to our frontiers. France was hemmed in on every side by foreign armies; by the Germans to the north, by the Spaniards to the south, by the Italians to the west. The ocean alone was free; but the English were equipping a considerable fleet, which might instantly block up our harbours. At the same time, the King's departure for Metz was talked of as an event which was very soon to happen; at Metz, it was said, he would be attended by a part of the army, and supported by the legions of the

Emperor.

Emperor. There he was, like a conqueror, to dictate laws to his submissive people, or thence he was to march, in order to crush its wild rebellion. The partisans of privileges, victorious in his train, were to resume and re-enjoy all their dignities.

No persons belonging to the royal family could think of remaining any longer in the kingdom, from their dread of the vengeance of the people. *Mesdames*, the King's aunts, led the way, and repaired to Rome with all convenient expedition. The people, which fore-saw the object of their departure, attempted ineffectually to oppose it; but, upon the report that *Monsieur*, the King's brother, was also preparing to quit France, a prodigious concourse assembled about his palace, and obliged him to give his word that he would not leave the kingdom.

Soon after happened the celebrated affair of the poniards. While a popular commotion was excited at Vincennes, for the demolition of that famous prison, a horrid tragedy was preparing at the castle of the Thuilleries. Some poniards made purposely, and of a particular form, demonstrated that the plot had been a long time in agitation: this instrument was held by a strong ring, and there shot forth a blade with two edges, and terminating in the manner of a

viper's tongue. The rendezvous was appointed at the castle ; there a band of the King's pretended friends were to assemble ; they were to cry out that his life was in danger, and to make use of the weapons which they had brought with them. A person who had repaired thither two hours before the time discovered the whole conspiracy. The national guards perceived a poniard under his coat ; he was arrested and rummaged ; pistols were found upon him, and he was conducted to the district. The guard, thus informed of what was expected to take place, saw, two hours after, some persons of a suspicious appearance in the same place ; these persons were searched in the same manner ; pistols in great quantities were found under their cloaths, and the guards were satisfied with disarming them, and driving them from the Thuilleries. There was a great number of them in the garden ; they received the same treatment. Some persons were seized, and soon after set at liberty. No mischief happened to any one ; the King's life, in particular, was out of danger ; the disappointment and affront which the conspirators had experienced, was the only vengeance inflicted on them, and the courts of justice took no farther notice of the affair. The citizens, however, were now still more convinced, that there had been a design to carry off the King.

Their

Their fears increased at the rumour, that the King was soon to take a journey to Saint-Cloud. They looked upon this journey, the apparent object of which was to spend his Easter at that palace, which he could as well do in the capital, as a pretext to favour his escape. The idea of the dreadful evils which would result from the King's flight, and the horrors of a civil war, incensed the minds of the citizens. The people thronged tumultuously to the palace, just as the King had stepped into his coach, and obstinately opposed his departure. In vain did M. Baillie and M. de la Fayette endeavour to employ their ascendancy, in order to procure liberty for the King to leave Paris; no attention was paid to their remonstrances. Some vehement harangues cried, that, should the King once quit the kingdom, the blood of the citizens would run in rivers through the streets, and France be left a prey to all the horrors of a civil war. These frightful images imparted to the people, and even to the guards, such a degree of perseverance, that the King and Queen were under the necessity of returning to the palace. We know very well, exclaimed the grenadiers, that we are violating the law; but the safety of our country is the first of all laws.

The King repaired to the National Assembly, in order to communicate to it his intention of

persisting in the design of going to Saint-Cloud, and declared, that no opposition ought to be made to his desire, lest an opinion should be entertained that he was no longer a free agent. In fact, he did go to Saint Cloud; and, choosing the juncture least adapted to procure credit for his assertions, he ordered the minister of foreign affairs to write to all the ministers at the several courts of Europe. In this letter he charged them, in a very serious manner, to make known to all the sovereigns the King's attachment to the constitution; he summoned to their recollection his engagements, his promises, and all the free acts which he had performed, for the purpose of manifesting his intentions. While the minister, who, perhaps, was not in the secret of the Austrian committee, was making use of this language, and the Assembly, applauding it, was giving orders that this letter should be circulated through the kingdom, a scheme was really in agitation for effecting the King's escape.

The oath required of the clergy was one of the pretexts used for endeavouring to create one of those quarrels which are termed schisms, and in which men separate into parties, and then fight, for the sake of abstract questions which they do not understand. The National Assembly had given the title of *Civil Constitution of the*

the Clergy, to what was nothing but its organization. It should seem that the Assembly would have done better in not engaging in this affair, since each profession and each professor can arrange themselves agreeably to their own mode of proceeding, saving the superintending power of the government. It ran the hazard of reviving, under one form, a body which it had destroyed under another. But priests maintain such a fast hold of all temporal affairs, and attach themselves so closely to the interests of the government, that it is difficult to separate them from these affairs and these interests, and, take the matter up in whatever shape you will, the priesthood still meets you at every corner ; this creates a degree of embarrassment in every country, where the sovereign, be it what it may, hath a serious inclination to be master.

The National Assembly, then, having organized the clergy, according to the principles of the French constitution, required of the priests the oath, which had been taken by all the citizens, to support the constitution ; but it required, at the same time, that they should swear to maintain the civil constitution of the clergy. Of all the military men who have taken, and broken, the civic oath, not one ever thought of saying that Heaven was injured by the military orga-

nization : their pretext hath been, that they had already taken an oath to the King, which rendered the latter null and of no effect. But priests are in the habit of identifying themselves with God, and whoever offends them offends Heaven. Accordingly, certain subtle minds soon discovered the means of creating a schism, in asserting, that this civil constitution was a spiritual affair, nay more, that it was another religion ; that to require such an oath was a restraint upon the freedom of conscience ; that it was putting priests to the torture, and exposing them to suffer martyrdom. They even desired death, and that they might be led to execution, well assured that the National Assembly would never do any such thing.

There was found in the kingdom a considerable number of well-meaning persons, who imagined, that their consciences had received a material injury by this new organization of the clergy : for what men most believe, is very often, what they least understand. Meanwhile, the nonjuring priests were obliged to quit their parishes, and pensions were allotted to them : but they endeavoured to preserve their influence over their parishioners, and to interest them in their favour, by all those means which continually lie within reach of those, to whom men have committed the government of their reason.

This division inspired the enemies of the constitution with the hope, that the French might be seduced into a civil war for the sake of the priesthood, since they would not go to war for the sake of the nobility, which, in truth, had no abstract ideas to present to the subtle minds of the discontented. The courtiers and the friends of privileges on a sudden became devout ; they were devout even at Court ; nay, they were devout even at Worms and at Coblenz. But the citizens of Paris, even such as were least enlightened, did not become the dupes of this mummery : now, without Paris, there can be no civil war.

The peace enjoyed by the Emperor was the source of sanguine hopes to the French partisans of privileges. All Europe had suspended its ordinary quarrels, and nothing remained to divert the attention, which one half of the courts of Christendom were paying to the affairs of Poland, and all of them to the affairs of France. The emigrants, who were received and caressed by a few of the princes of Germany, were making slender levies, and denouncing mighty threats. But a design, much more dangerous to the French, had been long ripening ; the court of Vienna and the court of Spain, that is, the nearest relations of the King and Queen, were

the secret spring of this machination. This, it was said, was the cause of the general armistice agreed to by the belligerent sovereigns. The couriers, who were incessantly passing and repassing from one court to another, and the visits which took place between two or three great potentates, appeared to have no other object. The plot was conducted by M. de Breteuil : M. de Calonne was soliciting aid from the ministry of Great Britain, and the princes were travelling to every court in Christendom. Piedmont, Venice, Vienna, successively saw them seeking, and obtaining promises of men and money. They afterwards returned to Worms and to Coblenz. There they formed a little court, which they have since augmented, to the end that none might doubt, that it was still the court of France which was making war upon the nation. Versailles was transported to Worms.

But the means employed by M. de Bouillé were the most dangerous and the most treacherous, as his plots were contrived within the kingdom. He it was, who, after having long refused to take the oath to preserve the constitution, which was required of all the military, took it afterwards with an air of frankness, which imposed upon half the kingdom. The King seemed to think him a proper person to be entrusted

trusted with the care of the frontiers, and accordingly M. de Bouillé had the government of Lorrain. He it is, who hath since been reproached with the useless massacre of some regiments led astray by an extravagance of patriotism, with the disasters of the city of Nancy, and with a civil war which continued for some days between the soldiers and the citizens, a scene of discord calculated to irritate the whole army, and to incense it against the nation. He took advantage of the important post which had been confided to him, in order to contrive a retreat for the King upon the frontiers of Luxembourg, a country belonging to the Emperor, and that the army which the King should have, might be supported by all the forces of Germany. To ungarrison the frontier, to leave the strong-holds defenceless, and the arsenals without arms and ammunition, to collect about him the foreign regiments in the service of France, to sow dissension amongst the national troops, to hold a correspondence in the towns with the partisans of the old government, to fortify a camp upon the frontier, were the means employed by M. de Bouillé for making war upon the nation, whose pay he was then receiving. Montmédy, a strong town, was the place to which the King was to be conducted,

for

for the purpose of taking the command of the nobility, and of putting himself at the head of a party in opposition to his people. But it is said that a more secure retreat was preparing for the King, in a town situated on a foreign territory, at the distance of two leagues from the frontier. In vain did the citizens of those districts send us notice of their defenceless situation, and of the preparations to which they were eyewitnesses ; the minister at war constantly asserted that all was well ; the minister for foreign affairs gave us repeated assurances of the amicable dispositions of the other courts of Europe. The executive power, which ordered every thing, and had the disposal of every thing, possessed the greatest advantages over the nation, and understood right well how to avail itself of these advantages.

When the moment fixed on for the King's flight was approaching, the business of emigration proceeded with redoubled vigour : all the money that could be collected was carried out of the kingdom ; in every regiment attempts were made to corrupt many of the soldiers ; the priests were indefatigable in their efforts to create dissensions in private families ; several officers quitted their regiments ; the commanders of the king's guards exerted their authority, and the influence of the *esprit de corps*, in order to engage them in the

the conspiracy; and multitudes of those who had lately enjoyed the title of nobles, were seen eagerly flocking to the capital.

An account of the King's escape was already spread through foreign countries, and several persons at Paris received the like intelligence. The dread of popular fury, when the event should be fully known, dispeopled the castles and the country-houses of the gentry. Their titled inhabitants either hurried to Paris, where they imagined that their swords might be of service to them, or they abandoned the kingdom, carrying off with them considerable sums of money. From their foreign retreat they exhorted their friends to quit France. The municipality and M. de la Fayette received advice, that the King's escape was very shortly to take place; the periodical papers announced it; and the Queen herself spoke of it with an air of pleasantry to the officers of her guard, on the very evening before it happened. The members of the municipality and M. de la Fayette seemed to have taken sufficient precautions to obviate such an event; but their precautions were not sufficient. The King, the Queen, their children, and Madame Elizabeth, the King's sister, fled on the night of the 20th of June, which was precisely the shortest night in the year. Monsieur fled likewise. They took the

road to Montmédy, and Monsieur the road to Mons.

As soon as intelligence of this affair was received in foreign countries, there was no longer a doubt there that France would become a prey to all the miseries of anarchy and civil war. But, unquestionably, if ever there was a grand and glorious spectacle, it was that displayed by the French nation from Calais to the Pyrenees. The first was a moment of surprize, the second of calmness and tranquillity. Every eye was now fixed upon the National Assembly, the sole but powerful resource of a great people. Never hath been, never will be, a nation's majesty more imposing. At Paris, it seemed that the citizens were disengumbered of a heavy burthen; they no longer had a King. The people, by a general emotion, effaced every where his name, and defaced every where his effigy; it did the same with that multitude of ensigns, which, under the reign of despotism, are decorated with his titles, or with his diadem; and in the evening there remained not a single vestige of his dignity. The national guards assemble under their colours, and march, to the sound of military instruments, to the National Assembly, in order to take the oath of fidelity. Their example is imitated by the citizens of Paris, and, during three whole hours,

they

they were, filing through the hall, holding up their hands, and taking the oath.

The Assembly, meanwhile, evinced that it was worthy of the nation's confidence; it immediately issued orders to the several ministers to put the laws in force. It dispatched couriers to all the departments, with injunctions for arresting all persons quitting the kingdom, and with information respecting the measures adopted by the Assembly. It required all military persons, who were public functionaries, to take the oath of fidelity to the nation. During that memorable sitting, which lasted seven days and seven nights, it was occupied in preventing disturbances, in encouraging the citizens, and in demonstrating, both by its coolness and by its firmness, that it was worthy of commanding in such circumstances. It is remarkable, that, on the second day after it had taken every precaution which the security of the empire demanded, it quietly resumed the order of its interrupted labours, and discussed the penal code.

Three days were thus spent without the presence of a king. France was united, strong, and peaceable. The two parties even appeared to be on better terms throughout the kingdom, and every where the national forces were placed upon

an authoritative footing.* But when men figured in their minds a fugitive King, breaking his word, which he had pledged to them so often and so solemnly ; when they reflected that he was on the point of re-entering the kingdom at the head of a foreign army ; that the neighbouring potentates were only waiting for that juncture, to invade the French empire in several places at once ; and that he would be followed by that multitude of nobles and great lords, who were declaring that he retarded their blood-thirsty designs ; indignation and fury rejected all controul, and became irresistibly terrible.† In some parts of the kingdom, the persons of the mal-contents were secured, but no violence or ill-treatment was offered to them ; and, perhaps, they have never been so safe, both with respect to their fortunes and their lives. The fugitives, mean while, were triumphing at Mayence, at Coblenz, at Luxemburgh, at Bruffels, at London, in Germany, in Italy. Their demonstrations of joy proceeded even to extravagance. They were persuaded that the hour of proscriptions and of vengeance was arrived. Couriers are dispatched to all the courts of Europe, and

* Dans un état imposant.

† L'indignation et la fureur étoient au comble.

the French emigrants are on their march to form a junction with the King.

It is one of the inconveniencies attending kingly government, that the safety of an entire nation depends on the existence of its chief. France was just upon the point of becoming a prey to all the miseries of civil war, because one man had departed from the empire. The fate of the kingdom was in suspense; and Europe anxiously looked on, in order to see how the first scene of that long and bloody tragedy would open.* But a few citizens saved the state, by arresting the King, when he was not many leagues from the frontier. It had been long customary to say, that the forty thousand municipalities of the kingdom were so many centinels of the revolution; the assertion was now proved. The members of the municipality of Saint-Mené-hould were taking the alarm at some movements made by the troops quartered in that city, when the Sieur Drouet, a post-master, went to give them information that he had seen a carriage pass, the appearance of which had given rise to some suspicion. He was ordered to follow it. The travellers had seemed to him to be no other than the King and Queen; and their carriage

* Comment alloit commencer cette longue suite de scènes sanglantes.

was escorted by dragoons.* He takes a cross road, reaches Varennes before the King, gives notice to the post-master; and, as it was then midnight, previously to requiring assistance or awaking any person, they both went to the bridge by which the travellers were to pass, with an intention of barricading it. Fortunately, they found there a cart loaded with furniture; this cart they overturned at the entrance of the bridge. They then went to give information to the procurator of the *commune*, to the mayor, and to the commanding officer of the national guard. Eight men of this guard arrest the King, in spite of the hussars, who hasten up sabre in hand: they cried out to the latter, that, if they meant to tear him from them, it should be as a dead man. The commandant of the national guard had ordered two pieces of cannon to be brought thither, but without either powder or ball; he pretends to be just preparing to fire them off upon the hussars: the victory is yielded, and the King a prisoner. The alarm-bell was rung every where; the national guards arrived from all quarters; the soldiers themselves declared for the same cause; and M. de Bouillé, renouncing

* Was it not an egregious blunder to travel with such an escort? Instead of being surprized at their ill fortune at Varennes, one should rather be surprised that they were not stopped nearer the capital.

the

the design of carrying off the King, made his escape out of the kingdom.

The King was led back to Paris by some thousands of the national guard, who had joined him on the way. The brave citizens of Varennes, who had arrested him, accompanied him to the the capital, the armed citizens of which went to receive him at some distance from the precincts. Five hundred thousand persons beheld him as he passed; no reproaches, not a murmur escaped them ; but all was silence, silence the sullen signal of his people's disapprobation;* every head remained covered, not a hand was uplifted ; and the King must have learned, on that day, that it is the people which is the sovereign. He was conducted to his palace of the Thuilleries, where the Assembly had ordered him a guard under the command of M. de la Fayette.

The Assembly being desirous of instituting an inquiry into the crime which had been committed against the nation, either by carrying off the King, or by favouring his escape, gave orders that all those who composed his retinue should be apprehended. They were examined, and the King's mere declaration was admitted. The King declared, among other things, that his intention had been to go to Montmédy, in order

* Un silence improbateur régnait par-tout.

to prove to all the world that he was free, to secure the kingdom from foreign invasion by a vigilant attention to the frontiers, and to visit every place where he might consider his presence to be necessary. Several were convinced of the sincerity of the King, to whom no scheme hath been ever proposed which was not calculated to interest his heart : his advisers would not have presumed to own to him, that he was going to make war upon his people. Neither could it be doubted, that a proposal had been made to all the great powers of Europe, to avail themselves of the opportunity for invading France, and dividing it amongst them. The honour of this sublime idea is attributed to the Elector of Mayence.

The National Assembly had to guard against the impression which the King's flight had made upon the minds of men in general, and against the indignation of the people, proofs of which it was receiving every day. Already, several were heard exclaiming, that never more could any dependence be placed on the King's word ; that the French could never more obey a Monarch who had betrayed them ; that the King ought to be tried for having abandoned the nation ; and that his flight was on the point of giving birth to a civil war ; that the Bourbons would continually regret that despotism, which had been ennobled by

by the names of Louis XIV. and his successor, and would consider themselves as for ever degraded and cast down ; that there would remain in their hearts an ever-durable resentment ; and that they would seek and find opportunities of being revenged, and of oppressing that liberty which the people had acquired with such a struggle. They maintained, that we ought to avail ourselves of the present conjuncture, for expelling, from the midst of France, an enemy, which would never permit her to enjoy the blessings of repose ; that liberty was incompatible with hereditary monarchy ; and that it were adviseable to establish a council of regency, to be elected by the nation, and responsible to the nation, and that to this council the executive power should be entrusted.

But the National Assembly did not think that the kingdom was in a condition to support a second revolution. The finances were in disorder, the specie had disappeared, the new organization was far from being well established, the taxes were unproductive, and the people were sighing for repose. Any farther agitation would have banished industry, to obstruct which, for any considerable length of time, is tantamount to its ruin and annihilation. The Assembly had, moreover, decreed, that France was a monarchy ; and it cannot be supposed, that a country of so vast

extent could be reduced under a form of government entirely republican. The greatness of the distances, the various descriptions of inhabitants, so different even in language, in customs, and in manners, ideas so new to most of them, the name of King, to which their ears had been invariably accustomed, the attachment arising from habitude, were considerations which induced the Assembly to be of opinion that France must continue a monarchy, and that, in the new constitution, where the ministers alone are responsible, Louis XVI. was the monarch best adapted to the French.

Add to this, who could foretell what would be the issue of that other revolution ? The King, the nobility, and the clergy united, still possessed sufficient means to raise disturbances in the kingdom. The captivity of the monarch rendered him an interesting object ; and any judicial proceedings against him would have enlisted in his cause a prodigious number of partisans, and lighted up the flames of civil war. Foreign princes might have surprized us in that weak and discordant condition ; and, although none of them singly should have been possessed of sufficient force, for attacking us in the ordinary situation of things, a confederacy, which it would be no difficult matter to effect, might lacerate our empire, should it fail of dismembering it. The plan

plan of a council of regency, by awakening the ambition of all such as might have pretensions to it, would have created divisions in the National Assembly, distracted the kingdom, and multiplied the sources, already but too numerous, of dissensions and party distinctions.

The result of these considerations was, that the Assembly was convinced, that the constitution should be finished in the same mode which had distinguished its commencement. Louis XVI. the King of a free people, and who imposes his own laws upon himself, ought to be satisfied with the prerogatives annexed to his royal dignity : his escape having been evidently suggested to him, the nation would act a part highly worthy of her own greatness, in committing such a fault to oblivion.* The King also might be sensibly affected by this magnanimity.† He must have learned at last, after so many attempts which proved abortive, that it was impossible for him to oppose the national will, and that his interest was, to unite with his people.

In restoring peace to France, he would bestow that blessing on himself. His family would reign, without a rival, over the French ; the kings of Europe would no longer have any pretext for supporting him, or rather for dethroning

* Il devenoit digne de la nation d'oublier cette faute.

† Le roi pouvoit en être touché.

him ; in conjunction with the nation, he would become only the more able to prevent the dismembering of the empire. He might foresee the time when other potentates would, in like manner, be obliged to restore to their citizens at least a part of their just rights, and, since the æra of such a revolution was marked by the hand of destiny, it were an advantage to be the first crowned head who had submitted to it.

The National Assembly, therefore, ordained that the revolution was complete. This was a stroke of exalted wisdom, and could no otherwise be justified than by an exalted power. The same body made a revision of its decrees, and drew up the constitutional act, which was to be presented to the King for his acceptance. It left him at liberty, with respect to both time and place, to examine this act, and to accept it, or refuse it. Several intrigues were now formed, with a view of traversing this great object. The partisans of privileges, alarmed at the turn which affairs were evidently taking, re-commenced their accustom'd machinations. The King's brothers, who had now formed a junction, still adhered to their plan of policy, which consisted in declaring that the King was not free, and in refusing to acknowledge any act which he might perform. Some foreign courts supplied them with money, and permitted them to enlist men : they were

aflo-

astonished at seeing so sudden a conclusion to those events, with respect to which the false calculations of the emigrants had inspired them with false expectations. France seemed upon the point of settling upon a new foundation, and of resuming all the vigour of a people restored to youth ; while intrigue, both within and without the kingdom, was exerting all her combined efforts to impede the course of that high destiny, which terrified almost all the potentates in Europe.

But at length the King accepted the constitution of France, and this splendid act decided the fate of the revolution. Undoubtedly, we shall still be exposed to some inquietude ; the partisans of privileges will still possess the means of disturbing our tranquillity ; and our passion for liberty will long encourage the suspicious, and even the exaggerations which accompany it. The powers newly constituted will be unsteady * for some time, before they retire within their proper limits, or operate in the fulness of activity. Our finances will look forward to that light of information, and to that easy and habitual course, which experience alone can impart to them. Foreign courts will acknowledge or not acknowledge our constitution, according

* Balanceront.

as their political views shall lead them to hope or to despair, of profiting by the spoils of our empire. But the revolution of France will resist every assault, by its own intrinsic mightiness,* for it is the work of ages, of nature, of reason, and of force.

We shall one day be able to develope, more circumstantially, events so interesting to this nation, and in producing which she hath universally co-operated. Our intention, at present, hath been merely to sketch a rapid picture of the revolution, as an account of a battle is given, on the day following that on which the battle was fought. Common observers have beheld nothing in this astonishing spectacle, which France hath exhibited to Europe, but men combating men with all the cruelty of civil rage, and passions contending with passions. But the enlightened of every country have easily perceived, that our's was the cause of the whole human race, and they looked forward with anxious hearts to the final issue of such a contest. The human species may be for a long time degraded and abased, in those countries where there is but one master, one opinion, one law, and one book ; for despotism, possessing herself of these manageable reins, retains for ever under the yoke those herds of human beings, whose reason is not making

* Par elle-même.

any

any progress. In such countries, to change opinion is a crime, since in fact it is disobeying the master and the law. But in nations where books abound and study is become general, men insensibly disengage themselves from the burthen of ignorance, and from error, which is worse than ignorance, in order to arrive with certainty at truth ; for our reason is capable of being improved unlimitedly. There, to alter opinion is a virtue, since, in fact, it is shaking off the yoke of error : there, the tyrants of thought are the worst of men, since they are considered as the enemies of mankind, the progress of which they would endeavour to retard : they degrade, as far as such degradation depends on them, the master-piece of nature.

The revolution of France, then, hath been the result of the light of knowledge, which had penetrated every class of citizens in this kingdom, to a greater degree than it hath illumined other nations. It commenced the moment men began to reflect, the misconduct of three reigns matured it, the opposition made by the privileged orders hath accelerated it, and French impetuosity hath produced its consummation. When Bacon made his first experiments, when Montaigne doubted, when Bayle became the advocate-general of philosophy, they were preparing

paring the revolution of France.* But the light of reason belongs to every nation and to every land, and, at the present day, no potentate, no political aggregation of men, can obstruct or retard its progress. It will, therefore, continue its task with that deliberation and that wisdom, which bring events to maturity without forcing them ; and while France shall be employed in finishing the distressful struggle in which she is now engaged, the nations of Europe will not behold, without emotion, the completion of that wondrous destiny, on which depends the destiny of the universe.

* The two last did not always doubt or philosophize to good purpose.

POLITICAL REFLECTIONS

ON THE

PRESENT STATE OF AFFAIRS.

By J. P. RABAUT.

СКОЛЯСТІВІ

СКАЛЯСТІВІ

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POLITICAL REFLECTIONS,

&c.

WHILE writing the history of the revolution of France, certain reflections presented themselves to my mind,—reflections which the brevity and rapidity of the relation would not suffer me to insert in the body of the work: I have singled out some of them, in order to annex them to this new edition, and I give them to the reader in all the simplicity and negligence of the first glance.

I.

Human revolutions happen, either for the sake of men, or for the sake of things, or for the sake of opinions; they are all cemented with blood.

Revo-

Revolutions for the sake of men are those in which men fight for such or such a king: in this class may be ranked the revolutions caused by conquerors, when twenty nations fight for twenty kings against one.

Revolutions for the sake of things, are those where nations quit their own country in order to invade another. Of this kind there are two very celebrated: that of the northern nations, who, at periods not far distant from one another, invaded Europe and Asia; this was a war of nations who had no houses, against nations who had: the next was that of the Europeans in the East and West Indies, after the discovery of America and the Cape of Good Hope; this was a war of nations, who had neither gold, spice, nor muslins, against nations who had.

Revolutions for the sake of opinions take place, when an end is put to an opinion long established, and another opinion succeeds it: these are either local or universal. Universal revolutions, in matters of opinion, are those which extend their influence over a great part of the human race.

II.

Of this latter kind, three very remarkable ones may be instanced.

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The first was the transition from Sabeism, or or the adoration of the heavenly bodies, to Polytheism, which is the worship of certain gods and genii, by whom those heavenly bodies had been typified: it extended throughout the then known world. The remembrance and some monuments of it still remain, but we are ignorant of its history. The second was the transition from Polytheism to Christianity, which last was nothing more than the revelation of certain mysteries or truths, which till then had been concealed from the profane. The third, which happened in Arabia and Africa, was the transition from idolatry to the theism of Mohamed. These two theisms contended for six hundred years, and at last divided the world between them, each occupying two parts of it.

III.

Revolutions which result from the transition from one opinion to another are always sanguinary, since they who got their livelihood by the old opinion are interested in preventing the establishment of the new one. And here it is no longer a conflict of opinions only, it is a war of men: doctors, kings, nations, magistrates all are hurried along, all fight, until the new opinion prove triumphant.

IV. There

IV.

There are two grand epochs of change in the opinions of modern Europe. By the irruption of the barbarians, who destroyed the Roman empire, the monstrous alliance between the ignorance of the conquerors and the religion of the vanquished, engendered superstition, which, in fact, is nothing more than ignorant religion. After Charlemagne, the division of the empire occasioned endless subdivisions; and this produced the feu dal system, which, in fact, is nothing else than subdivided sovereignty.

The question which agitates France at this day, and which certainly will occupy the rest of Europe, is, whether superstition and the feudal system be institutions eternal and necessary?

V.

Superstition, or rather such superstition, must have an end, when ignorance, and the barbarism of the times which gave her being, are at an end. Ignorance is like night, which must necessarily give place to day. Superstition is born in darkness; her growth and the horror of darkness keep pace with each other; she is inauspicious and alarming at the hour when

goblins, bugbears, apparitions, and horrible beasts and monsters take possession of the earth, and affright or devour human beings. She disappears at the arrival of the dawn, when we can distinguish those objects which have terrified us in the dark, and when the monsters run to hide themselves in the forests.

VI.

The feudal system must terminate when the people lifts its head ; when fief-possessing kings are no more than fief-possessing persons, enjoying certain privileges ; when, by dint of subdivision, the feudal system is so spun out, and minced down, that it hath no longer any consistency ; when nobility, having been either sold or given to persons of little consequence, is no longer an object of the public esteem ; when, on seeing *plebeians* become *nobles* for their money, one ceases to consider the nobles as a particular race of men ; when opulence and commerce place the *vulgar* on a level with the *nobles* ; when men of letters and men of wit, by living with the nobles, discover their own superiority ; when feudal countries are covered with academies, colleges, professors, learned men, poets, eminent artists, wealthy merchants, and that multitude of amiable, polite, and well-ac-

complished *blackguards*,* who are tempted to suppose themselves at least equal to the nobles. Then it is that opinion perishes.

VII.

An opinion, once extinct, never again comes to life ; we pass on to another. Cannons, sabres, pandours, death's-head hussars, nothing whatever is of any signification : the multitude says to the nobles as the man said to Jupiter ; Thou art in an ill humour, therefore art thou in the wrong.

VIII.

It is asked, whether, if two cashiered opinions unite, they may not recover their former dignity. This cannot be ; for the same enlightened wisdom hath suppressed both the one and the other, and two cyphers do not constitute a unit.

IX.

Natural institutions endure perpetually, or, if interrupted, they rise again, like those rivers which, after running for some time under ground, burst forth a few leagues off, and continue their progress in the face of day. Unnatural insti-

* Tant de *vilaine* aimables, polis et instruits.

tutions commence, grow, oppress, disgust, or weary, and then the world shakes them off: now, the fantastic institution of the feudal system is unnatural. The hermits of the desert have disappeared; knights-errant are no more; the templars, the jesuits, the monks and nuns of every colour have vanished. Were it extraordinary that the feudal system should vanish in its turn?

X.

The celebrated crusades conferred on Europe, arts, sciences, the enfranchisement of cities, and the freedom of the peasantry: this was the first blow given to the nobles by themselves. It is said, that, in order to give the finishing stroke, they are preparing another crusade.

XI.

The eighteenth century hath paved the way for important alterations in human opinions, and, consequently, for a revolution, which hath had its commencement in America and in France. It hath met with but few obstacles in America, since that country, new, without neighbours and without prejudices, displayed none of those old monuments which render old opinions respectable, and since, moreover, men had been transplanted thither in a condition almost equal, and were disposed to approximate by reciprocal ne-

cessities. The prejudices of a forgotten society were extinguished in the new one ; she was both morally and physically in a new world. This is accounting for the contrary having happened in France.

XII.

France hath not effected, but commenced her revolution.

XIII.

The change of opinion which is in agitation, rests entirely upon these two words, *equality* and *liberty*. Now, hitherto political opinion hath been founded upon these two other principles, *inequality of rights*, and *servitude*. But the transition from this opinion to the former must be marked by the strongest resistance on the part of all those, who, from interest or from prejudice, adhere to the old opinion, that is, of three fourths of the inhabitants of an enlightened country ; of all in countries which are not enlightened. Recollect that Asiatic Monarch, who was almost stifled with a fit of laughter, when a Venetian told him that his country was governed without a king. There is little more reflection in one half of Europe.

XIV.

The epoch of the revolution, commenced at the close of the eighteenth century, will be intimately

mately connected with the declaration of rights. Even were the rest of the constitution to perish, this declaration will float ; in spite of every submersion, it will rise up somewhere. It hath been easily established in America, because, there, there were neither kings, nor priests, nor doctors, nor nobles to assault it ; but, as soon as it had crossed the ocean, in order to visit the old continent, and to shew itself in the midst of immense and populous cities ; as soon as it attempted to establish itself in kingdoms overburthened with cathedrals, abbeys, towers, fortresses, steeples, cloisters of every form, and having no auxiliaries but the wise and the people, it was necessarily exposed to the most audacious insults.

XV.

There is a gospel of the declaration of rights, as there is a gospel of the Christians ; it ought to be persecuted, because it contains *glad tidings to the meek and lowly, and is folly and madness, according to the notions of this world.* It is a singularity worth remarking, that the gospel is nothing more than a declaration of rights ; its mysteries were a long time hidden, because they attacked the priests and the great.

XVI.

Cruel as the wars may have been, which the declaration of rights occasioned, they ought not to be imputed as a reproach to those who proclaimed that declaration : men must first come of the invention of the art of printing. If the torrent of opinions hath become large and rapid, it is because it hath been swelled by a great number of rivulets, and hath directed its course through successive generations.

XVII.

The Christians long concealed their gospel, and did not publish it until they thought themselves strong. The gospel of the declaration of rights hath been entrusted to a nation noted for indiscretion and levity, and who tells whatever she knows. This, then, is all that can with reason be complained of : but the declaration of rights is come round again, like a comet which re-appears in due season ; the astronomers had foretold it.

XVIII.

Here a grand subject of controversy for the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries ; namely, whether nations belong to kings, or kings belong to nations ; whether authority be instituted for the

the pleasure of those who govern, or for the happiness of those who are governed.

XIX.

These two questions will be long debated, on the one side by men of sense, and on the other by men of royalty.* But the latter will at first have the advantage, since they plead full-handed, as the phrase is. These contests will be so many storms, which will ripen the revolution.

XX.

The disadvantage of nations consists in their ignorance, in their dispersion, in the diversity of languages, in that of customs, laws, and manners, in the stupidity of national hatreds. Kings are possessed of armies, of all the wealth of nations, and of the advantage of habitual authority: they all speak the same language; they have their ambassadors, their spies, their correspondences, and their treaties, the promptitude of will, of accord, of execution, and every one knows that they are cousins.

XXI.

In general, a new truth requires thirty years at least, to be established amongst a numerous peo-

* Par les Rois.

ple, when that people is calm and unimpassioned. Before it hath resounded several times in every ear, before it hath roused the indolent, struck the inattentive, converted the obstinate, and the superstitious, which is the same thing, and unmasked hypocrisy, the generation hath passed away. But, in extraordinary junctures, and when two opinions joustle, that which is the true one is proclaimed so loudly and so forcibly, that it makes a rapid progress ; it is strengthened by contradiction, and propagated by the passions : one year of war does more for its success, than a century would at other times.

XXII.

It happens also, that as a truth never goes alone, but is attended with a train of consequences, contradiction, which, as we all know, strikes our new flashes of light, calls up from the abyss of darkness truths of which one should not otherwise have thought so soon ; so that the enemies of a truth find themselves overwhelmed with a throng of auxiliaries, who effectually put them to flight.

XXIII.

It is possible, that all the kings of Europe may form a coalition against an humble page of writing ; but, after a number of cannot-shots, and when

when those potentates have destroyed three or four hundred thousand men, and laid waste twenty countries, it will not be the less true that *men are born and continue free and equal, as to their rights, and that the nation is the sovereign* : and it is possible, that their obstinacy may have occasioned the discovery of other truths, which, but for the wrath of those great princes, mankind would never have thought of.

XXIV.

It is useless, undoubtedly, to offer advice to the corporation of kings ; first, because they will not read my reflections, and, secondly, because it is the nature of the *esprit de corps* never to understand any thing, and to run headlong down the course which its inclinations have marked out for it. But still it is useful to write, because the people reads.

XXV.

Men are destroyed, for such is the dismal appendage of a monarch's occupation ; but kings cannot kill opinions. As little can they make them travel back the way they came ; for, after a prodigious slaughter of human beings, and after all the hideous massacres which heroes shall have achieved, there will be neither kings, nor executioners, nor even priests, to make us unthink

think what we have thought, or unsay what we have said. It will, then, be necessary for kings to stifle truth, erect tribunals of inquisition, put a stop to all the printing-presses in Europe, silence the English and every other free nation, and annihilate North America. This war against reason, then, is nothing else than madness, like so many other wars, which end in the ruin of those who kindled them. The good La Fontaine says, *En toute chose il faut considerer la fin.*

XXVI.

It hath been said, for two years successively, that three hundred thousand Germans, fifty thousand Russians, ten thousand Swedes, twenty thousand Swiss, thirty thousand Italians, and thirty thousand Spaniards, are to confederate in the spring, in order to kill the men of France, butcher their wifes and children, burn their towns and harvests, and make a cruel war on them, because the French have declared that all men are brethren, and that they do not wish to make war on any one. Is such madness as this credible?

XXVII.

What would the Swedes say, who are now holding their States-General; the Poles, who have made for themselves a constitution to their own

own fancy, were we to send four hundred thousand soldiers to ravage their territory, and punish them for having given themselves laws to their own liking, and not to ours ? They would say, that we were a nation of fools, of barbarians, of madmen, a nation which no longer deserved to exist upon the globe.

XXVIII.

When wandering nations, who were for the first time united by the social tie, heard announced, in the name of heaven, the first laws of civilization, were their ears delighted with more sublime truths than those which, at our regeneration, have been proclaimed in the name of the French ? These truths have said :

“ Men, associated for the purpose of legislating for yourselves, you all bring hither an equal right : he who is the least considerable in this immense multitude, shall have the same right to common protection ; all privileges are abolished. Your properties shall be equally protected, for you bring them into the common society ; no rash hand will presume to make any attempt upon them. You shall be free in your thoughts, in your opinions, in your actions, in your discourse, in your writings, in your commerce, in your houses, in cities, in the country, on your travels.

“ vels. All that the law requires of you, is to
 “ injure none, as you wish that none should do
 “ you an injury. Let all watch over all; let
 “ the person of each of you be placed under
 “ the safeguard of the rest; and let certain citi-
 “ zens chosen amongst you, and by you, watch
 “ more particularly over your security.

“ It is necessary that you should have laws,
 “ precisely for the purpose of maintaining your
 “ rights, and of preventing any from attempting
 “ to violate them; but these laws shall be the
 “ expression of your will. It shall not be in the
 “ power of one man to give them to you, for he
 “ would pay more attention to his own interests
 “ than to your's. Men chosen by yourselves
 “ shall legislate for you; but the right of so-
 “ vereignty still remains in you, since you have
 “ the right to alter your laws, when they no lon-
 “ ger prove suitable to your situation. You
 “ shall, therefore, always have representatives,
 “ but you shall never have masters.

“ Your expences shall be common; none
 “ shall be dispensed with from contributing to
 “ them; each shall furnish his contingent in
 “ proportion to his fortune; and the assessments
 “ shall be made by persons chosen by your-
 “ selves; and, although the laws which you
 “ shall have made, and the magistrates whom
 “ you shall have chosen, watch over your safe-
 “ ty,

“ ty, each of you shall enjoy the right of com-
 “ plaining to the established authority, of any
 “ injustice which he shall have suffered ; for
 “ you are associated with no other view than to
 “ be free, tranquil, and happy.

“ Men and brethren, remember that you are
 “ so related to the whole human race ; respect
 “ the rights of the nations which are your neigh-
 “ bours, as you would that they should respect
 “ your's ; undertake no war from a spirit of
 “ conquest, but defend yourselves courageously
 “ whenever you shall be attacked, for your cause
 “ will be a just one.”

Now, should history one day inform posterity, that, “ Scarce had this wise people pronounced these words, when all the neighbouring nations fell upon it, in order to destroy it ;” what would our posterity think of so barbarous an age ? But this is not what history will say : she will trace, in characters of fire, the famous and ineffectual confederacy of kings, which is not the confederacy of nations.

XXIX.

I hear it sometimes said, that the French should have contented themselves with laying down principles for their own particular state, without spreading abroad those principles amongst other nations. But is it really their fault, if their

principles are so general, as to be adapted to all men of all times and of all countries ? Nay, is it not a proof of the excellence of their principles, which depend neither upon ages, nor on prejudices, nor on climates ? Have they invented them maliciously, and in order to impose on kings and on the great ? And is there any man so silly, as to scruple to rebuild his shattered dwelling, because others might be tempted to re-edify theirs ? If the French language is understood through all Europe, are the French to blame ? Ought they, through fear of being listened to and imitated, to observe a strict silence, or speak a language different from their own ?

XXX.

The French constitution is founded upon the principles of the soundest morality ; upon justice, for it wills, that none should do to others what he would not that they should do to him ; upon equity, for it enjoins each to do for others, what he would that they should do for him ; upon universal benevolence, for it wills that the French should look upon all other nations as their brethren, as families of the great nation of mankind : the declaration of rights amounts to nothing more. Nevertheless, a violent outcry hath been raised in Europe against the French nation and its principles : it hath been asserted, that

that they meant to overturn every thing. This was tantamount to saying, that Europe was in a state of barbarism, and destitute of morality. But the case is otherwise ; and the shock which the enemies of reason, of virtue, and of liberty, are preparing, is likely to produce the strongest illumination, for the age of illumination is arrived.

XXXI.

The French are guilty of a great crime : they have changed the face of politics. They have the assurance to assert, that wars should be defensive only ; that the people, whose blood is spilt with so little ceremony, should be consulted ; that wars are not undertaken for the sake of kings, who are enriched by them, but for the people, which is ruined by them ; that the interests of the people ought to be the basis of every treaty ; that the policy of cabinets should be frank, honest, unsullied by the despicable custom of *espionnage* ; that treaties hitherto have been nothing but a market of human beings, where the speculators calculate how many must be led to butchery, and how many must be kept to fatten. The statesmen have risen with one accord against these unrighteous maxims : the whole *corps diplomatique* hath shuddered at the idea : they have sworn that it shall cost the lives of several hundred thousand men : blood, per-

adven-

adventure, will stream, and that copiously ; but reason will say, like Galileo ; *Però si muove.**

XXXII.

The war now preparing must be the final effort of the force of kings.

XXXIII.

When important opinions terminate, the important powers founded upon these opinions are always affected with a delirium : they always read the future in the past : according to them, what hath been ought to exist continually. This blindness is one of the combinations necessary to precipitate their fall ; for he who knows how to keep his feet upon the edge of a precipice, does not fall down that precipice ; the fool, when he is pushed, precipitates himself.

XXXIV.

Some of the English say to us : your revolution cannot hold, for you have no leaders ; you have no men who tower above the rest : we have had a Cromwel, a Fairfax ; this it was which decided the revolution in our island.— The error of these English is the consequence of their confounding revolutions which are made

* *It moves, nevertheless.*—Galileo, it is well known, was condemned by the Inquisition, for having asserted that the earth moved round the sun.

for

for the sake of men, with those which are made for the sake of opinions. The latter are brought about by society at large ; all are leaders,* all are institutors, since all are equally interested in the affair. Such a revolution consists, not in the re-establishment of the rights of one man, but of the rights of all. Were there a chief, a hero, in the case, it would prove no more than a revolution for the sake of one man.

The revolution will, perhaps, be finished by one man, but it must be commenced by all.

XXXV.

There are but three powers in Europe that decidedly wish for war, and these three are precisely those who have the least right to wish for it. There is a fourth sovereign ; but I do not reckon him, since he is no longer a power.

XXXVI.

It is a fortunate circumstance for Europe and for France, that the latter hath no allies, for nothing could save them from a general war. Those who thought to injure the cause of liberty, in depriving us of our allies, or in dissolving those alliances which they pretended to strengthen have even done good service to liberty. The cause of the principles is found pure and without mixture.

* So much the worse.

Elementary opinions, principles, are like water, which always finds its level : we arrest it in its course ; we oppose dykes to it, we drain it ; but still it will re-unite somewhere.

XXXVII.

The advisers of the Court have, in general, given it bad counsel, in prevailing on it to persist in forming alliances for the king, when they should have been formed for the sake of the nation. They have said to him, “ Such a one is your brother-in-law ; that other is your cousin : they will support you.”—Yes, but against whom ? for I see nothing in France but the nation and the king.

XXXVIII.

It was the palace of the Thuilleries which tore the Family Compact of 1756.

XXXIX.

They thought to play a wicked stroke of finesse, in depriving the nation of her alliances. What will be the result of it ? either she will be free to choose, or she will wait without impatience and without pride, till others come to seek her alliance.

XL.

The alliances of a nation should be founded upon her interests : they should be freely and
pub-

publicly discussed ; they should possess a character of freedom, of brotherhood, and of solemnity, which may cordially unite the citizens of the two contracting nations. Compared to these, how cold are the alliances of kings ! how little certainty, how little durability to be found in them ! for we see that cabinets always reserve to themselves the means of breaking or of frustrating the intent of such alliances ; that they have stipulated for the interests of a single person, and not for those of the nation.

XLI.

War is the habitual state of Europe ; treaties of peace are no more than truces ; we lay down our arms only because we are tired of fighting, and with the hope of taking them up again. We are formed for a state of war ; for the famous political balance is nothing else. The intricate connection of treaties, of alliances, and of guarantees, renders them impracticable, or of no effect : it is impossible that those affected and forced attitudes can hold long. The great powers will still make attempts to swallow up the little ones ; but the very strides which they will take towards conquest, will mark the æra of liberty in Europe.

XLII.

By the way, the design concerted for laying an embargo* on all the printing-presses in Europe, is a very singular coalition. But the time is not far off, when you shall have a press for twenty-five *louis*, when, instead of a secretary, you will hire a compositor : then will the liberty of the press be as common as the liberty of the writing-desk.

XLIII.

There hath appeared in France one of those men who can dart from the present into the future : he hath declared that the time must come, when all nations shall form but one, and when national aversions shall terminate : he hath foretold the republic of humankind, and the nation *unique* : he hath proudly styled himself the ambassador of mankind, and asserted that all the nations of the earth were his constituents : he hath foreseen that the declaration of rights, which passed from America to France, must one day become the social theology of man, and the morality of those human families, commonly called nations. He was a Prussian and one of the nobles, and he hath now become a man. Some told him that he was a visionary. He answered in these words of a philosophic writer : “ One

* De restreindre.

“ might

“ might compose a volume of the false maxims
 “ which are credited in the world : there, one
 “ lives upon a small fund of principles, to which
 “ very few think of making any addition. Does
 “ any take a towering flight, and dare to look
 “ beyond the limits of these principles ; the world
 “ takes the alarm ; he is considered as a dan-
 “ gerous person ; at least he is accounted whim-
 “ sical and eccentric.”

XLIV.

When the Spanish inquisitors discovered America, they little expected that the human race would recover its rights in those regions. When the fanatical crusaders took Constantinople, they had no idea that Europe would thence derive that light of knowledge which had rendered the crusades ridiculous. When Leo X. erected the first theatre at Rome, he little thought that the stage would give new life to philosophy. When the popes patronized the art of printing, they never once suspected that it would prove the ruin of their power. When the Arabs expelled the camel-driver, who presumed to assert that there was only one God, they little expected that the *hégira*, or flight, would become one of the most memorable æras in history.—A truth is like all the other buds of nature, which contain, in an imperceptible point, the buds of buds *in infinitum*.

XLV.

The balance of Europe was a commencement of civilization, and a rude essay at public right. The barbarians committed destruction ; they then settled ; after which they fought amongst themselves. Potent kings next appeared, and wars were carried on more systematically. Regular troops, and ambassadors, were the next invention ; thence arose the diplomatic science, and the balance of power. Such is, in a few words, the history of fourteen centuries. Will any one presume to say that the human mind is to stop here ?

XLVI.

Nations are to nations what a man is to a man, brethren who possess reciprocal rights and duties. The declaration of the rights of nations is the same with the declaration of the rights of man : *Liberty, security, property, equality, and resistance to oppression* : such is public right. This truth is premature, but it is a truth. France hath framed the constitution of one people ; upon the same principles will be formed one day the constitution of nations.

Whoever says that nations and governments should have a system of morality different from that of individuals, calumniates human nature, and proves himself to be ignorant and silly.

XLVII.

XLVII.

The human mind is capable of unlimited improvement: why should men wish to refuse it this capability with regard to politics? Let it be observed, that the written history of human societies in the West does not include a period of three thousand years, which amounts not to a hundred generations; that the civilization of Europe, reckoning from the reign of Charlemagne, hath existed but a thousand years, or thirty generations; that the revival of literature cannot be dated so far back as two hundred and fifty years; that philosophy is not fifty years old; that reason advances slowly, and with unequal steps, as a man makes but little way, and finds himself often stopt by the pressure of a great crowd. Do not say, then, that we are arrived at the last limits of human reason.

XLVIII.

Had the nation wished to behave unfaithfully towards the proprietary princes, she would have preserved their rights; for, their vassals deeming themselves unhappy when compared to their neighbours, the territories of those princes would have been soon deserted, and they would have been under the necessity of selling them: a cabinet, in love with political cunning, would not have failed to take advantage of such a circum-

stance. But a nation is frank, and practises no artifice. She fairly offered to indemnify them : and if greatness of soul be a fault, the nation hath committed one, and we know that this is not the only fault of the kind which she hath committed. But generosity will henceforward be the national virtue : she will triumph over all, even over diplomatic cunning, which hath been disguised under the name of policy.

XLIX.

France reads, in the treaty of Westphalia, .
 " That with the consent, advice, and inclination
 " of the electors, princes, and states of the em-
 " pire, it is agreed that the places, ceded by the
 " empire to France, in Alsace, shall belong
 " henceforth to the Most Christian King, and to
 " the crown of France, with all manner of jurif-
 " diction and sovereignty ; and that neither the
 " Emperor, the empire, the house of Austria,
 " nor any other power, may in any wise contra-
 " dict the same ; that they establish the crown of
 " France in full and just sovereignty, property,
 " and possession over them ; renouncing for ever
 " all rights and pretensions which they had to
 " those places ; that the said seigneuries and rights
 " shall be cancelled from the matricule of the empire."
 France reads this, and imagines that the sove-
 reignty of Alsace belongs to her. But the Em-
 peror

peror puts in a claim, in consequence of the 48th article, relative to certain seigneuries, and which, by a contradiction founded on a quibble, maintains France in the *sovereignty*, and preserves to the empire the *immediacy*. And men will fight about these pitiful equivocations ! And kings will act like theologians, who cause deluges of blood to flow on account of a mere ænigma ! And nations will massacre one another in support of them ! A dishonest equivocation, some diplomatic treachery, reserved in some line of an important treaty, in opposition to the spirit and the letter of that treaty, shall set all Europe in a flame ! Masters of the world, if it was God who gave you the rule and government of it, did he give it to you in order that you might drench your dominions with human blood ? If you owe your sway to nations, did they give it to you in order that you might butcher them ?

L.

If Alsace be a fief of the empire, the King of the French had a right to a seat in the diet: if he hath not a right to sit in the diet, Alsace is not a fief of the empire.

LI.

There is in Europe a spiritual feudal system; uprior a n d even divine personage is the king
para-

paramount of this spiritual system ; he hath the *superium dominium* : inferior personages hold of him : these also exercise a feudal jurisdiction over certain other spiritual dependencies ; the plebeians are all vassals, and annexed to the spiritual glebe under the title of laics. These vassals take an oath of implicit obedience ; their service consists in sacrificing their thoughts. The seigneurs enjoy the plenitude of judicial power over the soul ; the churches are their castles, the gilt crosses their vanes, the sacred banners their ensigns. This spiritual order possessed of old a degree of temporal power that was prodigious.

LII.

Men had no sooner discovered that they had a soul, than persons were found exceedingly willing to take possession of it : such was the origin of spiritual jurisdiction. Estates in the land of ideas are infinitely lucrative ; they produce corn, wine, oil, silver, gold, and every thing else that can render life agreeable.

LIII.

There are some sovereign personages in Germany, who insist that certain plebeian souls of France owe fealty and allegiance to them : they absolutely desire that French thoughts should cross the Rhine, in order to pay submission to the thoughts

thoughts of Germany. This abstract or abstruse pretension would have given rise to furious wars in the twelfth century.

LIV.

Why do not kings, when they are inclined to make war, say so honestly? Why seek for pretexts, which never impose on any one? Why do ministers act like attorneys? It is a glorious sight for those who read the Gazette, that is, for all the world to see the masters of humankind, and the *representatives of God*, racking their brains in order to refine upon a falsehood. Speak out, give the thing its proper name; it is, in this country, the war of kings, of priests, and of nobles, against men.

LV.

By what means hath a people succeeded in shaking off these three yokes all at once? The answer is, it durst do so. And how durst it do so? Answer, because it had five hundred thousand well-informed citizens. This phenomenon will for a long time excite astonishment, although the art of printing should explain it.

LVI.

The whole policy of France is henceforward to consist in the propagation of knowledge,

ledge, and in the liberty of the press. The alphabet will be the legislator of the ensuing generation, and the first schools of France will become the school of humankind.

LVII.

It is a fortunate circumstance for the interests of humanity, that those governments which are desirous of extending their territory, with a view of augmenting their revenue, do not always find countries to conquer. Expences must be incurred both of men and money, and frequently these expences are lost. They have, accordingly, turned their attention to other speculations, and have made commerce their grand object, which, while it increases the wealth of the subject, augments the treasure of the master. This taste for commerce, in modern cabinets, hath been attributed to policy ; as if commerce derived its being from any other cause than avarice ! But at least it brings men together ; it insensibly destroys prejudices ; it enlarges the compass of thought ; it weakens national hatreds ; it unites nations by those ties which are precious to them ; it humanizes the globe ; and factitious wants prepare nations for a more intimate association, as real wants formed the earliest societies,

LVIII.

LVIII.

Every thing proclaims to us that a time will come, when those national follies called *wars* will terminate. Already is the rage of the primitive hordes much softened ; the necessity for enjoyments, manufactures, and the arts, have rendered nations more sedentary ; individuals travel, and nations stay at home ; they fight only by detachments ; being all of them commercial, they all dread those violent shocks, which disarrange and suspend their speculations, and divert the course of trade into other channels. The effect of this necessity is impeded, I confess, by certain powers which are conquest-mad, that is to say, powers which desire to take away from other nations their islands, their harbours, their colonies, in order to get possession of their commerce, as a strong man displaces a weak one. But this effect is an evidence of the cause, since their object in usurping is, to trade, to enjoy, and to live in tranquillity. Accordingly, we find that wars are less bloody amongst us, than with nations which are savage and ignorant : our legions thunder upon one another politely ; the heroes salute before they proceed to kill ; the soldiers of two hostile armies pay mutual visits before the battle, as a party fits

down to supper before the dice-box is called for.* They are no longer nations that fight, nor even kings, but armies and men paid for fighting : it is a game, where they play for what is staked, and not for all that they have in the world ; in fine, wars, which in old times were a madness, are at present only a folly.

LIX.

We who are only the people, but who pay for war with our substance and our blood, will not cease to tell kings, that to them alone wars are profitable ; that wars are the amusements of princes, and yield pleasure to none but those who make them ; that the true and just conquests are those which each makes at home, by comforting the peasantry, by promoting agriculture, by multiplying men and the other productions of nature ; that thus alone it is that kings may call themselves the image of God, whose will is perpetually directed to the creation of new beings. If kings continue to make us fight and kill one another in uniforms, we will continue to write and speak, until nations shall be cured of this folly : and should kings still persist, we will go to the field of battle, we will

* Avant de Jouer.

write our petition upon a heap of dead bodies, with the blood of the dying, and we will cause it to be presented by fifty thousand widows and a hundred thousand orphans.

LX.

The stupid antipathies existing between nations will diminish, when kings shall cease to animate them one against the other; for, at present, nations are sedentary and proprietary.

LXI.

One may calculate with exactness the progress of reason.

LXII.

Should the robust body of France sustain the shock of her revolution, we shall no longer behold those mighty armies with which so little is effected. The world will imitate the example of the French; and, in this point of view, as in so many others, the revolution of France will have saved the effusion of human blood, and conduced to the preserving and perfectionating the human species. Even kings will be surprised to find themselves more powerful and more rich, when they shall each be no longer obliged to take two hundred thousand young

(304)

men from the plough, to sacrifice the flower of their people, and to kill posterity.

LXIII.

The history of the revolution of France is a collection of prophecies.

A CHRO-

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CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

OF THE

PRINCIPAL DECREES

WHICH HAVE BEEN PASSED,

AND OF THE

MOST REMARKABLE EVENTS

Which have taken place during the Sitting

OF THE

CONSTITUENT NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.

X

2020 RELEASE UNDER E.O. 14176

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2020 RELEASE UNDER E.O. 14176

A

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE,

&c.

MAY 1789.

4th. THE procession of the States General to Versailles.

5th. Opening of the States General at Versailles.

6th. The Third Estate meet in the General Chamber, as also the two others in their several apartments. Deliberation upon the distinct verification of powers. Invitation of the Third Estate to the rest to act in conjunction with them.

7th. An Arret of the King against a journal presented by Mirabeau.

X 2

8th. De-

MAY 1789.

8th. Deputation from the Clergy to the Noblesse, respecting the union of the Three Orders.

9th. The Third Estate waits for an answer to its invitation.

10th. The Deputies are presented to the King.

11th. An Arret of the Third Estate with respect to the customs that regard Deputies.

13th The Noblesse refuse to join.—The Clergy propose the nomination of Conciliatory Commissaries.

14th. The Noblesse continue the verification of their powers.

15th. An Arret to prevent motions being journalized under the name of their authors.

18th. Nomination of Conciliatory Commissaries of the Tiers Etat.

19th. The King permits an account of the proceedings of the States General to be given in the journals.

20th. The Clergy give up their pecuniary privileges.

22d. The Chamber of the Clergy divides itself into Baillages, for the better examining its papers.

23d. Meeting of the Assembly of the Conciliatory Commissaries of the Three Orders. The Noblesse give up their pecuniary privileges.

24th. The

(309)

MAY 1789.

24th. The Delegates newly arrived are presented to the King.

25th. Another meeting of the Assembly of the Conciliatory Commissaries of the Three Orders.

26th. Report from the Commissaries.

27th. The Tiers Etat again invites the Clergy to re-unite.

28th. The King demands the re-union of the Commissaries in presence of the Keeper of the Seals, and the King's Commissaries.

29th. Arret of the Tiers Etat to demand that a verbal process of conferences be drawn up and signed by the Commissaries.

30th. Re-union of the Conciliatory Commissaries take place.

JUNE 1789.

1st. M. d'Ailly is nominated President of the Tiers Etat. Report of conferences.

3d. M. d'Ailly gives in his resignation. M. BAILLEY is nominated in his room. Conference of the Conciliatory Commissaries.

4th. Report from the above conference. Far-
ther

JUNE 1789.

ther conferences. Interruption from the King.

Death of the Dauphin at Meudon.

5th. Report from the conference the night before.

6th. Deputation from the Tiers Etat to the King.
His Majesty's Answer.

7th. The Chamber of the Third Estate is formed into twenty divisions.

9th. The Clergy decree that their Commissaries shall sign the verbal process of conferences.

10th. The Abbe Sieyes proposes to make another attempt towards the re-union of the Three Orders, and to form themselves afterwards into an acting body.

12th. The Tiers Etat invites for the last time, the two other orders to unite.

13th. The Clergy and the Noblesse deliberate upon the invitation from the Tiers Etat. The former call in the Baillages for the provisional exercise of their power. Three Curates from Porteau give up their privileges, as part of the body of the Clergy.

14th. Six Curates unite themselves to the Tiers Etat.

15th. Another Curate joins the Tiers Etat. The Noblesse lay an account of their proceedings before his Majesty, and communicate to the Tiers Etat the motives of their conduct.

16th.

JUNE 1789.

16th. The Abbe Sieyes proposes to the Tiers Etat to form itself into a National Assembly.

17th. The Tiers Etat forms itself into a National Assembly.

19th. The majority of the Clergy vote for a re-union.

20th. The hall of the National Assembly is shut up. The Delegates of the Third Estate repair to the Tennis Court, and mutually take an oath never to dissolve until they have given France a constitution.

21st. The Noblesse send a deputation to the King.

22d. The King's meeting the Assembly announced for this day, is put off till the next. The Delegates of the Third Estate assemble in the Church of St. Louis.

23d. The King meets the Assembly, annuls the *Arret* of the Tiers Etat, and departs. The Tiers Etat makes an *Arret* to persist in the fulfilment of their resolves, and declares the persons of the Delegates inviolable. Celebrated answer of Mirabeau to the Master of the Ceremonies.

24th. The National Assembly continues to sit. The majority of the Clergy declare in their favour.

25th. Nine Ecclesiastics, and seven of the Nobility,

JUNE 1789.

bility, unite themselves to the National Assembly.

26th. Deputation from the Noblesse to the National Assembly.

27th. Re-union of the Three Orders.

28th. The people testify their joy by every public demonstration, and form the most sanguine expectations.

30th. The majority of the Noblesse, and the minority of the Clergy, surrender their respective powers.

JULY 1789.

1st. The people of Paris solicit the King for the pardon of some soldiers who had been forcibly taken out of prison.

2d. The King's answer.

3d. The Duke of Orleans elected President. His refusal. He is replaced by the Archbishop of VIENNE.

4th. Decree respecting the admission of six Delegates from St. Domingo to the National Assembly.

5th. The German troops make quick approaches.

6th.

JULY 1789.

6th. Arret for a Constitutional Committee.

7th. A town of the province of Saintonge gives up the privilege of being exempted from paying towards the subsidies of supplies.

8th. Decree respecting absolute mandates.

9th. Plan for a project to regulate the proceedings of the Assembly.

10th. The National Assembly requests the King to send back his troops. The King satisfies them with regard to the occasion of their march. Great tumults at Paris.

11th. M. Neckar is dismissed, and sets off from Paris.

12th. The news of his dismissal is spread amongst the people. Great consternation amongst them. Prince Lambesc enters at night into the *Tuilleries*, at the head of his troops.

13 The National Assembly sends a deputation to the King, which describes to him the horrors reigning at Paris. Sinister answer of the King. The people are requested to have a regard to public order. Arret for raising corps of armed citizens. The troops are sent back. The responsibility of the Ministry declared.

14th. The people seize the arms of the invalids. Taking of the Bastile. M. de Launay is put to

JULY 1789.

to death. The National Assembly sits continually without breaking up. M. de la *Fayette*, as Vice President, continues to sit the whole night. Paris is under the greatest anxiety.

15th. The King comes to the National Assembly, and announces the departure of the troops. A deputation from the National Assembly is sent to inform the people. The Bastile is demolished. The Princes and others from the Court abscond.

16th. An Arret passes, requesting the dismission of his Majesty's Ministers, and the recall of M. Neckar. The King accedes to the desire of the National Assembly, and the wishes of the people. M. de Flesselle is put to death. M. Bailley is nominated Mayor of Paris, and M. de la *Fayette* General of the militia at Paris.

17th. The King comes to Paris in order to calm the disquietudes of the people. M. Bailley receives his Majesty at the entrance of Paris, and presents him at the *Hotel de Ville* with a national cockade. The King returns to Versailles, followed by the acclamations of the people.

18th. Tranquillity begins to be re-established at Paris. Carriages have free access along the streets as usual.

19th.

JULY 1789.

19th. Great tumults prevail in the provinces.

20th. M. de LIANCOURT, President. Addresses come from all parts of the kingdom, thanking the National Assembly for its very noble, spirited, and firm conduct.

21st. The King gives permission to his French guards to enter into the corps of armed citizens at Paris.

22d. Messrs. Foulon and Berthier are put to death.

23d. Proclamation from the National Assembly, recommending order and tranquillity to the people.

24th. Arret passed on the verification of the powers of the Deputies from Britanny, &c.

25th. Arret respecting an event which happened at the Castle of Quincey, &c.

26th. Dearth of Provisions at Paris.

27th. An answer from M. Neckar, dated from Basle, is read at the National Assembly. News arrived that the Abbe of Colonne was arrested at Nogent, as likewise of the arrest of the Abbe Maury at Peronne.

28th. Deputies from Rouen make an offer of corn.

29th. The return of M. Neckar. He goes to the National Assembly.

30th. M. Neckar goes to the *Hotel de Ville* at Paris.

JULY 1789.

31st. An Arret respecting the sitting of General Assemblies.

AUGUST 1789.

- 1st. Arret respecting deputations. Assassination at St. Denys.
- 2d. Some soldiers from the regular troops request to be enrolled in the National Guards.
- 3d. Decree, M. le CHAPELIER, President, respecting personal safety, personal property, &c.
- 4th. Abolition of privileges.
- 5th. Decree respecting the free circulation of provisions.
- 6th. Arret passed respecting the detention of the Duke de la Vauguyon.
- 7th. M. Neckar proposes to the National Assembly a loan of 30 millions.
- 8th. Abolition of feudal tenures.
- 9th. Decree upon the loan of 30 millions, at four and a half per cent.
- 10th. Decree relative to the establishment of the public tranquillity.
- 11th. Decree respecting the abolition of privileges which passed the House, August 4.

12th,

AUGUST 1789.

12th. Establishment of Committees to examine into points civil and ecclesiastical, as also feudal rights.

13th. Arret on the renewal of tythes. The King accepts the title of the Restorer of French Liberty; in consequence of which *Te Deum* is sung.

14th. Nomination of a keeper of the Archives.

15th. The oath of fidelity to the State is administered to the Swiss Guards, by M. de la Fayette, and taken by them.

16th. Great dearth of provisions at Paris.

17th. News arrived to the National Assembly, [M. de CLEREMONT TONNERE, President] of the arrest of M. de Cazalas in one of the southern provinces.

18th. Debate upon the declaration of the Rights of man.

19th. Arret respecting the reading of Addresses. The noted lamp is put up with iron clamps.

20th. The introduction, and the first articles of the declaration of Rights pass [under a decree].

21st. Fresh articles of the declaration of Rights are decreed. Rice is distributed in the several districts of Paris, in lieu of bread, of which there is a great dearth.

22d. The National Assembly continues its proceedings

AUGUST 1789.

ceedings from yesterday. The dearth increases.

- 23d. Liberty of conscience decreed.
- 24th. Liberty of the press decreed.
- 25th. Riotous crowds assemble before the doors of the bakers of Paris.
- 26th. The conclusion of the declaration of the Rights of Men and Citizens passes under a decree.
- 27th. Decree respecting the supplying the loan of thirty millions, by one of eighty millions, at five per cent. according to the plan of M. Neckar.
- 28th. The National Assembly begins on the formation of a Constitution.
- 29th. Decree respecting the free circulation of corn.
- 30th. The intelligence received of a plot being formed for a counter revolution, causes a great fermentation in Paris.
- 31st. The Bishop of LANGRES is chosen President.

SEPTEMBER 1789.

- 1st. A discussion of the power of the royal sanction is begun.
- 2d.

SEPTEMBER 1789.

2d. A Committee of trade and agriculture is appointed.

3d. Appointment of a Committee to examine into the state of St. Domingo.

4th. The power of the royal sanction continues to be discussed.

5th. Decree respecting provisions at Paris. Eighty waggons load of corn arrive from Brie.

6th. The prisons of St. Lazarus are demolished.

7th. Ladies make an offer of their jewels towards the supplies of the state.

9th. The National Assembly is declared permanent.

10th. Decree which declares the legislative body shall be only composed of one chamber.

11. An Arret which orders a Memorial sent by the King, respecting the power of the royal sanction, not to be read.

12th. A decree, confining the duration of each legislature to the space of two years.

13th. A dearth of provisions is again felt at Paris.

14th. Arret upon the form of asking the royal sanction; M. de CLEREMONT TONNERRE being President for the second time.

15th. Decree upon the inviolableness of the King, the Crown's being hereditary, and the indivisibility of the empire.

16th.

SEPTEMBER 1789.

16th. The renunciation of some of the branches of the House of Bourbon is discussed.

17th. The famine increases.

18th. Decree respecting patriotic donations.

19th. The town of Chartres sends a large supply of flour to Paris, with a promise at the same time of sending every week as much.

20th. The King promises the promulgation of the decrees passed the 4th of August, throughout the kingdom.

21st. Decree confining the refusal of sanction to the second Legislative body.

22d. Decree respecting places and pensions. The King sends his plate to the mint.

23d. Decrees respecting the excise upon salt.

24th. M. Neckar lays before the National Assembly a dreadful picture of the state of the finances of France. The patriotic donations increase.

25th. Decree respecting the contribution of privileged persons.

26th. The National Assembly adopts the plan respecting the finances, proposed by M. Neckar.

28th. A decree which suppresses the rights of feudal privileges.

29th. Decree respecting church plate.

30th. Decree respecting some constitutional articles.

Oc-

OCTOBER 1789.

- 1st. Formation of a Committee for the examination of military affairs. Rejoicings of the Body Guards at Versailles.
- 2d. Formation of a Committee to inspect matters relative to domains.—Decree upon loans at interest.
- 3d. Arret passed for the drawing up instructions relative to the circulation of corn.—The want of provisions is very great.
- 4th. The populace take the cockade of a single colour out of the hats of those who wear them.
- 5th. Acceptation of the declaration of the Rights of Men, and of the articles decreed respecting the Constitution.—At night the people go to the King at Versailles
- 6th. The King and the Royal Family come to Paris.—Decree declaring the inseparability of the Assembly and the King.
- 7th. Decree respecting a uniformity of contributions as well as their continuance.
- 8th. Decree respecting the Deputies from the Chamber of Commerce.
- 9th. The King satisfies the provinces respecting the alteration of his residence.
- 10th. Annunciation of much disorderly conduct amongst the people.

OCTOBER 1789.

11th. The King and Queen pay for the redemption of such linen and winter cloaths as do not exceed the sum of 24 livres pawned by poor people at the office of *Mont de Pieté*.

12th. Decree for transferring the meeting of the National Assembly to Paris.

13th. Arret respecting proceedings against criminals.

14th. The Duke of Orleans requests leave to go to England.

15th. Arret upon the abolition of Customs respecting deputies.

18th. The King reviews a division of the National Guards in the *Champs Elysees*.

19th. The National Assembly sits for the first time at Paris. News arrived that the Duke of Orleans is stopped at sea. The National Assembly orders him to be enlarged.

20th. Decree respecting the transmitting the decrees to the provinces.

21st. A baker falsely accused with keeping back the bread from the poor, is hanged by the populace. Martial law against riotous mobs.

22d. People of colour demand the Rights of citizens.

23d. A committee is established to examine respecting prisoners confined by *Lettres de cachet*.

24th.

OCTOBER 1789.

24th. Ministry demand the nature of their responsibility.

26th. Decree proroguing all convocations of provincial Assemblies.

27th. A decree passes which excludes bankrupts from all public offices.

28th. M. CADMUS, President. Provisional decree respecting monastic vows. The King and Queen consent to stand godfather and godmother to the infant of the unfortunate baker.

29th. A plan relative to the mark of silver is discussed.

30th. Arret for expediting and drawing up the acts of the Assembly.

31st. Ecclesiastical property goes through the discussion of the National Assembly.

NOVEMBER 1789.

1st. The author of *Domine salvum fac Regem* is taken up for examination.

2d. Decree respecting ecclesiastical property.

3d. Decree respecting the vacation of parliaments.

4th. Decree respecting the acceptance of decrees. A deputation from the Bishops is sent

NOVEMBER 1789.

to the King to request that the play of Charles IX. may not be performed.

5th. Decree respecting the sending the decrees into the provinces.—Rules for a provisional police.

6th. First motion respecting the admission of Ministers for consultation.

7th. Decree passed for excluding Members of the National Assembly from being in the Ministry.

8th. News arrived that M. de Caraman is arrested at Alençon.—The famine decreases.

9th. The National Assembly meet for the first time at the Manage.—Decree respecting the presentation and sanction of the laws.

10th. Decree relative to a seditious arrêt of the Chamber of Vacations at Rouen.

11th. The effect which the arrêt of the King's Counsel had on the above chamber.

12th. M. THOURET, President. A decree suppressing, at the desire of the King, all proceedings against the above chamber.

13th. Decree respecting the declarations of beneficed incumbents.

14th. Decree respecting the archives and books belonging to monasteries. M. Neckar lays before the National Assembly a plan for a national bank.

16th.

NOVEMBER 1789.

16th. Decree abolishing all law commissions for offices of judicature and *centieme denier*.

17th. Decree respecting the seditious arret of the parliament of Metz.

18th. Decree upon primary and elective assemblies.

19th. Decree respecting the administration of districts and departments.

20th. An offering made of silver buckles towards supplies.

21st. Nomination of Commissaries to regulate the dispatch of decrees.

22d. The community of Paris make a patriotic offering of their silver buckles.

23d. The ARCHBISHOP OF AIX, President. A decree upon the discussion between the districts and the community of Paris.

24th Declaration upon a deliberation of the States of Cambresis.

25th. Decree upon an address sent by the Revolution Club of London.

26th. Decree respecting the National Guards of Caen.

27th. Suppression of new year's gifts to persons in a public capacity.

28th. Decree respecting the accounts given in of the state of the finances.

NOVEMBER 1789.

30th. Decree which establishes the Island of Corsica as part of the French empire.

DECEMBER 1789.

- 1st. Continuation of articles respecting municipalities.
- 2d. Decree respecting provisional functions of the actual municipalities.
- 3d. The eligibility of the Representatives of the nation is discussed.
- 4th. Report respecting the state of the *Caisse d'Escompte*.
- 5th. Different plans for a national bank discussed.
- 6th. M. de Besenval's process is drawn up at the *Chatelet*.
- 7th. Decree respecting the troubles at Toulon.
- 8th. Decree respecting the Chamber of Vacations at Rennes.
- 9th. Provisional decree upon the organization of departments.
- 10th. Decree to have drawn up a recital of state affairs before a verbal process is made.--- Vandernoot and the States of Brabant send a letter to the King. The King sends it back.
- 11th.

DECEMBER 1789.

11th. Decree for the preservation of woods and forests.

12th. Decree postponing the raising of certain taxes in Brittany.

13th. Mournful incident happens at Senlis.

14th. Decree upon the constitution of municipalities.

15th. Decree respecting the Chamber of Vacations in Brittany.

16th. Decree respecting military conscription.

17th. Decree respecting divers taxes.

18th. Decree respecting proceedings relative to the finances.

21st. Decree respecting the extraordinary supplies.

22d. Rules respecting primary assemblies and administrative assemblies.

24th. Decree respecting the eligibility of non-catholics.

25th. M. de Favras is arrested.

26th. Decree respecting the patriotic contributions.---The King's brother comes to the *Hotel de Ville* in order to explain the nature of his concerns with M. de Favras.

28th. Decree respecting the jurisdiction of municipalities.

29th. Refusal of the offer made by the Genevians.

DECEMBER 1789.

30th. Decree respecting the toll-house of the
island of Barbe.

31st. Decree on a fixed price for day-labourers.

JANUARY 1790.

1st. Disturbance at Chaillot, in consequence of
an oath administered.2d. Decree respecting prisoners confined by
*Lettres de Cachet.*4th. Decree (the ABBE DE MONTESQUIOU, Pre-
sident) requiring the King to be requested to
fix himself the sum to be granted for the Civil
List.5th. Decree ordering the sequestration of the
estates of Absentees who are placemen.7th. Decree upon the form of the civic oath to
be taken by the National Guards.8th. Decree respecting the distinction of consti-
tutional and regulating articles.9th. Decree upon the fixing the limits of de-
partments.11th. Decree upon the conduct of the Chamber
of Vacations of the Parliament of Rennes.12th. Decree relative to the partition of the
kingdom.

13th.

JANUARY 1790.

13th. Decree, the city of Paris shall form one Department.

14th. Decree upon forming the decrees into the different idioms.

15th. Decree which fixes the names of the eighty-three Departments.---A young Englishman of the name of Nesham receives from the community of Paris the civic crown and a sword, as a testimony of public gratitude, for saving the life of a citizen in the troubles at Vernon.

16th. Farther decrees respecting the partition of the kingdom.

18th. M. TARGET, President. M. de Choiseul-Gouffier, the French ambassador at Constantinople, sends his patriotic gift.

19th. Illness of M. Neckar---Paris shews its concern.

20th. Plan for a law on the liberty of the Pres.

21st. Decree appointing four commissaries for the poor.

22d. Decree establishing a committee of liquidation.

23d. Decree upon the payment of tythes.

25th. Decree tending to efface all prejudices respecting the families of criminals.

26th. Decree which prohibits any member of the National Assembly from accepting any place

JANUARY 1790.

place under Government, or any donation from Government.

27th. Decree, making Rambouillet the ninth district of the department of Versailles.

28th. Decree in favour of the Jews of Portugal, Spain, and Avignon.---Part of the Noblesse of Brittany give up their privileges, and take the civic oath.

29th. Decree prohibiting the keeping studs of horses.---M. de Bezenval is set at liberty.

30th. Decree on the payment of taxes.

FEBRUARY 1790.

1st. Farther decrees respecting the division of the kingdom.

3d. M. BUREAU DE PUSY, President. Decree of a provisional tribunal at Rennes established.

4th. The King goes to the National Assembly, and takes upon himself the engagement, to love, maintain, and defend the Constitution. --- The members repeat the civic oath.

5th. Decree suppressing certain religious houses.

6th. Decree that the members of the Chamber of Vacations of the Parliament at Rennes have forfeited their privileges as active citizens.

7th.

FEBRUARY 1790.

7th. Farther decrees on the division of the kingdom.

8th. Decrees on the same subject are continued.

9th. The *Chatelet* draws up the process of M. de Favras.

10th. Decree relative to the troubles in some of the provinces.

11th. Decree respecting how the patriotic gifts are to be used.

12th. Decree upon religious orders.

13th. Decree respecting the suppressing of monastic vows.

14th. *Te Deum* sung, as also an illumination made on account of the King's conduct the 4th of this month.

15th. Decree relative to the chief places of departments and districts.

16th. Decree upon the alteration of the Seals of State.

17th. BISHOP OF AUTUN, President.

18th. Decree respecting monks and friars.

19th. Execution of M. de Favras.

20th. Decree respecting lay brothers.

22d. Inspection of the flour at the military school.

23d. Decree on the public tranquillity.

24th. Decree respecting feudal tenures---abolition of honorary distinctions.

25th.

FEBRUARY 1790.

- 25th. Farther decrees respecting feudal tenures.
- 26th. Farther decrees on the division of the kingdom.
- 27th. Decrees on the same subject are continued.
- 28th. Decree on the regulation of the army.

MARCH 1790.

- 1st. Decree upon the feudal tenures.
- 2d. The ABBE MONTESQUIOU, President for the second time. A committee is formed for the examination of affairs relative to the Colonies.
- 3d. Farther decrees respecting feudal rights.
- 4th. Decree respecting the Chamber of Vacations of the Parliament of Bourdeaux.
- 5th. Decree in order to obtain a communication of the red book.
- 6th. Decree relative to the delay of enforcing all provost judgements.
- 7th. Farther decree respecting how the patriotic gifts are to be used.
- 8th. Decree constituting the French colonies part of the French empire.
- 9th. Farther decrees on feudal rights.

11th.

MARCH 1790.

- 11th. Decree relative to the cutting down woods belonging to the ecclesiastic establishments.
- 12th. Report from a new memorial of M. Neckar on the finances.
- 13th. Decree respecting the prisoners confined by an order of *Lettres de Cachet*, or other arbitrary orders.
- 15th. General decree upon feudal tenures.
- 16th. M. RABAUT DE ST. ETIENNE is chosen President.
- 17th. Decree respecting the sale of national property to the value of four hundred millions.
- 18th. Decree relative to the preservation of the forests and domain woods belonging to the clergy.
- 19th. Decree respecting such monks as have left their cloisters, and such as live in common.
- 20th. Decree upon the eligibility of municipal officers to administrative Assemblies of departments and districts.
- 21st. Decree relative to the abolishing of the duty upon salt, as likewise a plan for making up the tax.
- 22d. Decree annulling all processes begun on account of suppressed privileges.
- 23d. Nomination of four commissaries to supervise the *Caisse d'Escompte*.

MARCH 1790.

24th. Decree suspending all proceedings relative to the exchange of domains.

25th. An order that decrees shall be presented for sanction in the space of three days, and that the Keeper of the Seals shall give in an account to the National Assembly in the course of eight days after.

26th. Nomination of commissioners for a treasury office.

27th. Decree respecting the payment of the patriotic contribution.

28th. Decree relative to instructions for the Assemblies of the Colonists.

29th. Decree respecting the functions of the King's commissaries.

30th. Decree ordering the discharge of persons under condemnation by the Provost Judges.

31st. The BARON DE MENOU appointed President.

APRIL 1790.

1st. The subject of the East India Company is discussed.

2d. Decree upon an address from the republic of the Grisons.

3d.

APRIL 1790.

3d. Decree respecting the commerce to the Indies.—Prince de Conti takes the civic oath.

5th. The judiciary organization is discussed.

6th. Decree, instituting juries.

7th. Decree respecting the payment of commissioned and non-commissioned officers in the French Guards.

8th. Decree which grants the same augmentation of pay to the marines which was granted to the land troops.

9th. Decree that the debts of the clergy are a national one.

10th. Decree, ordaining, in cases of eligibility, age to be no dispensation.

11th. Decree, authorising the continuance of the tax of Octrois.*

12th. The question, whether the Catholic religion shall be declared the religion of the kingdom, is discussed.

13th. M. DE BONNAI, President. The above subject is farther discussed.

14th. Provision for ministers of altars.

15th. The subject of assignats is discussed.

16th. Decree relative to the Jews of Alsace.

17th. Decree respecting the number, the form, and construction of assignats.

* A tax laid upon certain goods coming into the city.

APRIL 1790.

18th. Decree on the knowledge of the state of finance.

19th. Decree upon the eligibility of administrators and treasurers, &c.

20th. Decree respecting the places allotted for the King's hunting.

21st. An arrêt passes on the business of the Ecclesiastic Committee.

22d. General decree with regard to the chace.--- On the expence of the King's wardrobe.---A deputation arrives from Corsica: Paoli, at the head of the deputation, appears before the National Assembly.

23d. Decree to take away the collecting of the duty upon salt from the Farmers-General.

24th. Decree respecting the Parliament of Bourdeaux.

25th. Decree respecting the manner in which the patriotic gifts are to be used.

26th. The Regency of Algiers, in consequence of the demand of the King, sets all the French slaves at liberty.

27th. M. DE VIRIEN, President. Decree upon the oath to be taken by any of the members of the National Assembly who are going to enter upon any employ.

28th. The judiciary organization discussed.

9th.

APRIL 1790.

29th. Decree which confirms the free circulation of corn.

30th. Juries are established in criminal matters.

—The taking of the fort of Notre Dame at Marseilles.

MAY 1790.

1st. Decree respecting the clearing of morasses.

3d. Decree ordering the residence of the Judges of Appeal to be stationary.

4th. Decree determining that the Judges shall be elected for six years.

5th. Decree appointing the Judges to be elected by the people.

6th. Decree respecting several articles of a plan for a municipality for Paris.

7th. Decree that many persons shall not be presented for the King's choice by the electors and judges.

8th. Decree upon the nomination of officers charged with the administration of public affairs.

9th. Decree declaring the domains of the Crown alienable.

10th. M. THOURET is chosen President.

11th. Decree ordering twenty-eight millions to

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MAY 1790.

be paid from the *Caisse d'Escompte* into the public treasury.

12th. The alienation of national property discussed.

13th. Decree respecting the alienation of national property.

14th. Decree prohibiting the introduction of foreign salt into the kingdom.

15th. Decree on the drawing up of taxes.

16th. The question, Whether the right of making war and peace ought to be entrusted to the Legislative Assembly, or to the Executive Power? is discussed.

17th. Report of the troubles at Montauban. Decree upon the subject.

18th. Decree in order to re-establish tranquillity in the departments of the Higher and Lower Rhine.

19th. Decree ordering the payment of pensions, to the amount of 600 livres, to the appointed officers who are to receive the rents of the clergy.

20th. Decree ordering the freedom of the foreigners confined aboard the French gallies.

21st. Decree upon laying on *imposts* on woods in use.

22d. Decree declaring the right of making war and peace to center in the people.

MAY 1790.

23d. A decree passes, which lengthens the time of exchange of cash-bills for assignats.

24th. Decree establishing a tribunal of repeals.

25th. Decree relative to the accelerating the drawing up of taxes.—M. de la Fayette and M. Romeuf, his aid de camp, rescue, at the peril of their lives, an unhappy culprit out of the hands of the people, who were going to hang him.

26th. Decree ordering the residence of the Judges of the Tribunal of Repeals to be stationary.

27th. M. DE BEAUMETZ is chosen President. A decree passes, which establishes Tribunals of Commerce.

28th. Decree respecting the form of scrutinies, and the police of Electoral Assemblies.

29th. M. Neckar gives in an account of the receipts and expences of the months of April and May.

30th. Decree to hinder public beggars, and to establish poor-houses.

31st. Decree containing instructions respecting the sale of national property.

JUNE 1790.

1st. Decree respecting the form and circulation of assignats.

JUNE 1790.

2d. Decree which enjoins to curates to declare the new laws to the people in their Homilies.

3d. Decree that each department shall form but one diocese.

4th. Decree respecting some difficulties relative to the patriotic contributions.

5th. Decree augmenting the pay of the national troops.—The Mayor of Paris communicates to the National Assembly a plan for a general federation.

6th. Decree for the subdivision of the augmentation of thirty-two deniers which were added to the pay of a soldier.

7th. Decree which fixes the number of metropolitan fees and bishoprics.

8th. The ABBE SIEYES, President. Decree which fixes the number of the deputies of the National guards and regular troops for the federation, fixed for the 14th of July.

9th. Letter from the King to the National Assembly, in which he states the condition and expences of his household, and asks the sum of twenty-five millions for the civil list.—A grant is immediately decreed.

10th. Decree for fixing four millions of livres per ann. for the Queen's dowry.

11th. M. de Mirabeau announces to the National Assembly the death of Dr. Franklin.

12th.

JUNE 1790.

12th. Housekeepers make an offering of their silver buckles.

13th. Decree respecting public beggars.

14th. Henry the Fourth's battalion, in the national Parisian Guard, invites two hundred mendicants to an entertainment made at *Vaugirard*.

15th. Decree respecting the nomination of bishops, curates, and vicars, &c.

16th. Decree determining that the salaries of ministers of the Catholic religion shall be paid by the nation.

17th. Decree appointing salaries to priests who have taken the civic oath.

18th. Report from an intolerant and unconstitutional deliberation of some persons calling themselves the Catholics of Nimes.

19th. The National Assembly orders them to the bar.—M. Camus announces to the National Assembly, that the people of Avignon have unanimously voted for a re-union with France.

20th. Decree suppressing all orders, titles, and liveries.

21st. M. DE ST. FARGEAU, President. Report of fresh calamities at Nimes.

22d. Decree passed on the motion of Father Gerard,

JUNE 1790.

Gerard, that absent Delegates shall not be paid for the time of their absence.

23d. Decree respecting the livings of the Clergy.

24th. Decree which prohibits the administrative bodies from using the word Decree in their deliberations.

25th. Three deputies from Avignon demand to be heard by the National Assembly.

26th. Decree respecting the French fleet. The conquerors of the Bastile lay before the National Assembly the marks of their triumph.

27th. M. de Mirabeau the younger clears himself.

28th. Decree ordering a directory of departments and districts which might determine their several functions.

29th. Decree respecting the sale of national property.

30th. Farther decrees on the revenues of the present Clergy.

JULY 1790.

1st. Decree requesting the King to send to Taborago such supplies as that colony requested.

2d. Decree respecting impropriations.

JULY 1790.

3d. Decree on the buying up of feudal tenures.

Decree on the troubles at Haguenau. On the management of lotteries.

5th. M. de BONNAI, President.—Decree on the organization of the Judiciary power.

6th. A decree passes, fixing Bishoprics.

7th. A decree passes, which establishes Justices of the Peace.

8th. Decree on the functions of the Justices.

9th. Decree respecting the ceremony of the federation, and the form of the oath to be taken.

10th. A decree passes to restore to the heirs of those emigrants whose estates were confiscated by the revocation of the Edict of Nantz, the property of their ancestors.—A decree ascertaining the necessary claims to entitle henceforth to pensions.—Paul Jones, at the head of a great number of Americans, appears before the National Assembly, and in his official capacity, returns thanks to the Delegates for the great and noble example which they have given to the universe. General Luckner likewise appears before the National Assembly, and testifies his patriotism in the most expressive terms.

11th. Delegates arrive to the Federation from all parts of the kingdom.

12th. Decree respecting the state of the Clergy.

JULY 1790.

13th. A Deputation from the whole of the National Guards in the kingdom, pay their homage to the National Assembly and the King. M. de la Fayette addresses the Assembly and the King at the head of the Deputation.

14th. The first celebration of the general federation of the French.

15th. Decree directing that the *oriflamme* of the federation shall be hung up in the hall of the National Assembly.

16th. Decree respecting pensions.—Decree on the alienation of the National domains.

17th. Decree on measures to be taken respecting the insurrection at Lyons.

18th. Decree which postpones the time fixed on for the exchange of cash-bills. Rejoicings at Paris in honour of the members of the federation.

19th. First decree respecting the prescribing the uniform of the National Guards. Decree passes that sets aside the right of *retrait lignager*.*—Decree which appoints the ports of Orient and Toulon the harbours for the East India fleet to put in at their return, and where they are to disembark.

* A law which gave a power to the nearest relation to redeem an estate that had been sold, by paying within a year and a day the purchase money.

20th.

JULY 1790.

20th. M. TREILHARD, President. A decree passes, that abolishes the custom of rights of habitation, tolerance, and protection, hitherto in force against the Jews.

21st. Decree suppressing sworn estimators of estates, furnitures, &c.

22d. Decree which explains the decree relative to the chace.

23d. A subject on the judges of district is discussed.

24th. Decree that the appointment of officers of what was hitherto called the French Guards, shall be no longer at the charge of the public treasury.

25th. Decree ordering the drawing up a list of the departments which are yet in arrears of payment.

26th. Decree abolishing the right of planting trees in roads, &c.

27th. The department of Ardenne gives information that the Austrian troops have been granted by the Ministry free passage into the territories of France.

28th. M. de Montmorin explains the motives of the above permission. Decree ordering the troops to be forbid the passage.

29th. Formation of a Diplomatic Committee.
Messrs. Bonne Savardin, Barmond, and Eggs,

JULY 1790.

Eggs, are arrested at Chalon upon the river Marne.

30th. Decree ordering an inventory to be made of the titles, estates, &c. belonging to the Bishopric and grand Chapter of Strasburg.

31st. Farther decrees on pensions. Decree against incendiary libels.

AUGUST 1790.

1st. Decree against authors of libels.

2d. M. d'ANDRE, President. News brought of the insurrection at Fort St. Pierre, in Martinico.

3d. Decree respecting tribunals of appeals.

4th. Farther decrees on law proceedings.

5th. Decree that establishes Justices of the Peace and Tribunals for deciding family law-suits.

6th. Decree abolishing the rights of escheatage and extraction.

7th. Decree determining the reductions to be made in the ministerial departments.

8th. Decree ordering forty millions of cash bills to be given into the public treasury.

9th. Declaration and report from many publications which encourage the soldiery to insurrection.

10th.

AUGUST 1790.

10th. The Colony of St. Domingo sends to the National Assembly the fundamentals of their provisional constitution.

11th. The business of the 5th and 6th of October 1789, is discussed.

12th. Decree relative to the tribunal of Repeals.

13th. Decree on the decision of Judges relative to civil affairs and trade.

14th. Decree respecting the dependencies of the Princes.

15th. Decree to request to know of his Majesty to what use the seats which he wished to reserve are designed.

16th. M. DUPONT, President. News arrived of the insurrection of three regiments at Nancy. Decree ordering the punishment of the ring-leaders.

17th. Decree that the Protestants of Ausburgh shall enjoy as formerly their rights and privileges.

18th. Decree relative to the country seats and domains which the King wished to retain.

19th. Decree on several articles of the penal law respecting the navy.

20th. The Regency of Algiers demands a reason for the insults paid to its flag in the Mediterranean.

22d. Decree respecting post-offices and stages.

AUGUST 1790.

23d. Decree declaring there are grounds of accusation against the Sieur Perrotin.

24th. Decree respecting post-horses.

25th. Decree excluding the Clergy from any judiciary department.

26th. M. de Mirabeau, junior, resigns his seat as delegate.

27th. Decree ordering the discharge of such citizens of Avignon as are detained at Orange. The King gives up various seats which he desired to retain in his first letter.

28th. Decree respecting the commerce beyond the Cape of Good Hope.

29th. Decree relative to the pay of invalid officers, and the gratifications arising to them out of the lottery.

30th. M. DE JESSE, President. Decree respecting Justices of the Peace.

31st. Affair at Nancy.—The armed citizens of Metz desire to receive the first fire.—Heroic conduct of the brave Desilles.

SEPTEMBER 1790.

1st. Proclamation from the National Assembly, in order to promote order in the garrison of Nancy.

2d,

SEPTEMBER 1790.

2d. Decree respecting Judges, the Commissaries of the King, registers, &c.—Great commotions in Paris in consequence of the affairs at Nancy.

3d. Decree relative to the troubles at Nancy, ordering the offenders to be searched after, in order to be punished.

4th. M. Neckar gives notice to the National Assembly of his resigning.

5th. The subject of Assignats is farther discussed.

6th. Decree that the electors named by the Primary Assemblies shall continue for two years, and nominate to every department.

7th. Decree relative to the soldiery at Jales, who were misled by a fanatic zeal.

8th. Decree respecting the Clergy.

9th. Decree respecting regulations in the Ordnance.

10th. Decree exempting the public treasury from furnishing the expence of the provision magazine at Paris.

11th. Decree authorising the *Caisse d'Escompte* to pay into the public treasury 20 millions.

12th. Decree relative to the circulation of Assignats and their acceptation.

13th. M. BUREAU DE BUSY, President. Decree respecting the King's hunting.

14th.

SEPTEMBER 1790.

- 14th. Decree limiting the tribunals of the department of Paris.
- 15th. Decree respecting the free circulation of corn, and its prohibition from being exported.
- 16th. Decree ordering to pay the invalid fund 210,000 livres.
- 17th. Decree granting 60,000 livres for the relief of the unfortunate persons whose houses were burnt down at Limoges.
- 18th. Decree that no administrative body can stop the sailing of a man of war.
- 19th. Decree which declares the Presidents to administrations of departments and districts, eligible as Judges.
- 20th. Report respecting the debts of M. d'Artois.
- 21st. Decree respecting the form of the liquidation of the debts contracted by the provinces before the Revolution.
- 22d. Decree respecting the competency of military tribunals, their organization, and the manner of proceeding before them.
- 23d. Decree that the Members of the National Assembly cannot sit as King's Commissaries in tribunals, until four years after the end of the legislature.
- 24th. The sword-cutlers and gunsmiths who had their

SEPTEMBER 1790.

their guns and swords taken from them at the time of the taking the Bastile, demand an indemnification.

- 25th. The issuing out Assignats is discussed.
- 26th. Decree ordering the *Caisse d'Escompte* to pay 10 millions into the public treasury.
- 27th. M. EMMERY, President. The issuing out of Assignats is farther discussed.
- 28th. The same subject continued.
- 29th. Decree respecting the issuing out Assignats without interest.
- 30th. Report respecting the criminal proceedings of the 5th and 6th of October, drawn up at the *Chatelet*.

OCTOBER 1790.

- 1st. Decree ordering the soldiers and non-commissioned officers in the Swiss Guards the same pay as the French Guards.
- 2d. Decree which declares that there are no grounds of accusation against Messrs. Orleans and Mirabeau.
- 3d. Decree respecting the manner of paying the necessary funds into the public treasury.

4th.

OCTOBER 1790.

4th. The Minister gives an account of farther troubles at Brest.

5th. Decree respecting the pay of Adjutants and *Aides de camp.*

6th. Decree respecting the liquidation of offices.

7th. Decree on the election of Commissaries of Police in Paris.

8th. Decree respecting the loan of 80 millions, and other loans ; likewise that the interest of 400 millions of Assignats shall be no longer paid than the 16th of this month.

9th. Decree respecting the repeal of the tax upon the articles of leather, skins, oil, and soap.

10th. Decree to put in commission forty-five men of war.

11th. M. MERLIN, President. Decree authorizing the holders of manors, who are of the royal blood, to cut down the timber belonging to these manors in the course of the ensuing winter.

12th. Decree to re-establish order in the Island of St. Domingo.

13th. Decree relative to public education.

14th. Decree respecting Justices of Peace.

15th. Decree to nominate Commissaries to see 800 millions of Assignats issued out.

16th.

OCTOBER 1790.

16th, Decree that the interest of 3 per cent. on Assignats ceases this day.

17th, Decree ordering the degrees respecting the government of the Clergy in what was till lately called the province of Alsace, to be put in execution.

18th, Decree respecting the gratuity to be paid to those Curates whose parishes are extinct.

19th, The descendants of the French Refugees, who were dispersed by the revocation of the Edict of Nantz, demand to enter in possession of the estates of their ancestors.

20th, Decree on the steps to be taken against those who are indebted to the public treasury.

21st, Decree respecting the insurrection of the fleet at Brest.

22d, The National Assembly is informed, to its great sorrow, of the death of the brave Desseilles.

23d, Decree appointing the National Property to be immediately sold.

24th, Decree respecting the patriotic contributions.

25th, M. BARNAVE, President. Decree respecting patriotic contributions.

26th, Decree which fixes the form of the civic oath to be taken by the French Ambassadors and *Chargés d'Affaires* at foreign Courts.

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27th.

OCTOBER 1790.

27th. Modification of some articles of the Penal code respecting the marine.---M. de Fleuriel is appointed Minister of the marine department.

28th. Decree to request the King that he would enter into a negociation with the Princes who had possessed feudal rights in Alsace. Decree respecting the ecclesiastical possessions held by foreigners in the kingdom.

30th. Decree respecting the excesses and disorders committed by two regiments at Befort.

31st. Decree abolishing the taxes on salt, &c. Decree on the putting back the barriers.

NOVEMBER 1790.

2d. Decree respecting the new form of the Laws, and their being sent to the tribunals, &c.

3d. Decree respecting the salaries of Judges and the King's commissaries.

4th. Decree respecting the construction of Assignats, declaring, that whoever shall forge Assignats shall suffer death.

5th. Decree that 48 millions shall be lent to the public treasury for the service of November, by the *Caisse Extraordinaire*.

6th.

NOVEMBER 1790.

6th. Decree respecting the liquidation of the Admiralty offices.

7th. Decree respecting the liquidation of the public debt.

8th. M. CHASE, President.

9th. Decree on the opening of the Canal proposed by the Sieur Brulee.

10th. The divisions of Paris demand the Ministers to be sent back.

11th. Decree which allows to Bishops the right of granting marriage dispensations.

12th. Decree on the sale of the corn and flour belonging to the nation.

13th. The hotel of the Duke de Castries is pillaged.

14th. Decree respecting the functions and the pay of district receivers.

15th. Decree respecting the formation and conscription of parishes.

16th. Decree that the Isle of Corsica shall form a single department.---M. DE PORTAIL is named War Minister.

17th. Decree respecting the organization of the tribunal of Repeals.

18th. Decree on the nominating some officers to the rank of Adjutant Generals, and on the promotion of Adjutant Generals.

A a z

19th.

NOVEMBER 1790.

19th. Decree respecting the choice of Curates of parish churches.

20th. The King is requested to send troops to Avignon, in order to re-establish tranquillity, and protect the French constitution.

21st. M. ALEXANDER LAMETH, President. Decree respecting the re-election of municipal officers who went out of office by lot.--- M. DUPORT DU TERTRE appointed Keeper of the Seals.

22d. Decree respecting the legislature of domains.

23d. Decree respecting the contribution of domains.

24th. Decree respecting the salaries of Commissioners of War.

25th. Decree respecting the making the ports of Baionne, Marseilles, and Dunkirk, free ports.

26th. Decree relative to the jewels, ornamental trinkets, and gold and silver plate, sent to the *Hotel des Monnoies*.

27th. Decree relative to the oath to be taken by the beneficed Clergy.

28th. Decree respecting the right of Registry.

29th. Decree in order to re-establish tranquillity in the French Antilla Islands.

30th. Decree ordering the Pensions of the Clergy to be paid regularly. DE-

DECEMBER 1790.

- 1st. Decree respecting the Protestants of Alsace.
- 2d. Decree of the Organization of the Artillery.
- 3d. Decree which permits the administrative bodies to institute a loan for the expences attending deputations to the celebration of the federation on the 14th of July.
- 4th. Decree which makes a grant for the relief of the Poor.
- 5th. M. PETION DE VILLENEUVE, President.
The National Assembly is informed that the Island of Guadalupe has entirely submitted to its laws.
- 6th. M. de Sillery explains to the National Assembly the sources of the unfortunate disturbances of Nancy.
- 7th. Institution of offices for the verification of the claims of the creditors of the Clergy.
- 8th. Decree respecting the *imposts* taking place in Paris.
- 9th. Decree on the restitution of the property of fugitive monks, &c.
- 10th. Decree respecting the salaries of the present Clergy.
- 11th. Address from the people of Avignon to the National Assembly, thanking the Assembly

DECEMBER 1790.

bly for claiming Avignon as under the protection of France.

12th. Decree respecting the excesses of what were hitherto called the Belgic troops.

13th. Decree respecting the stamping a small silver coin.

14th. Decree relative to Children, one of whose parents might be a Roman Catholic and the other a Protestant.

15th. Decree relative to the Hospitals at Rouen.

16th. Decree respecting the revenues of the Clergy.

17th. Decree ordering the distribution of fifty thousand stands of arms to the National Guards of the kingdom.

18th. Decree on the buying of feudal rights.

19th. Report of the melancholy disturbances which prevail in Aix.

20th. Decree to send a regiment of regulars to Aix.

21st. Decree which orders a statue to be erected to the memory of the Author of *Emilia*, and that his widow be maintained at the expence of the state.

22d. M. D'ANDRE chosen President for the second time.---Decree respecting the chief seminaries and vicars.

23d.

DECEMBER 1790.

23d. Decree respecting the buttons to be worn by the National Guards.

24th. Decree relative to the property burnt in the public treasury.

26th. The King sends to the National Assembly an acceptation of the decree relative to the civil government of the Clergy.

27th. Decree relative to payments from the *Caisse Extraordinaire*.

28th. Decree establishing in various towns Justices of Peace, and Judges who are to preside over Commerce.

29th. Decree ordering a supply of 100,000 livres for the works at Cherbourg.

30th. Decree which offers a reward to the Inventor of any useful discovery.

31st. Decree respecting naval promotions.

—
JANUARY 1791.

1st. Decree which determines that officers of all corps shall receive the honorary mark of military service after being twenty years in the army.

2d. Decree respecting criminal procedures.

4th. The Clergy delegated to the National Assembly

JANUARY 1791.

sembly must necessarily declare if they will take the oath.

5th. The subject of Juries is discussed.

6th. Decree respecting the Collectors of the patriotic contributions.

7th. Decree relative to Message Offices.

8th. Decree on the stamps to be fixed on the instruments of Public Notaries.

9th. Decree on the granting an indemnification to the bearers of *Brevets de Retinue*.

10th. Decree respecting timber.

11th. Decree respecting the stamping of silver coin to the value of 15 millions, in pieces of 15 and 30 pence.

12th. Additional articles to the decree respecting timber.

13th. Decree that the election of Bishops and of Curates shall be determined by the majority of suffrages.

15th. Report on the donation from the *Clermontois* to the great Condé in 1648.

16th. M. L'ABBE GREGOIRE, President.

17th. Decree that Officers of the regular troops who have entered into the National Guards shall be considered as acting troops.

18th. Decree opening a free trade to the nation with Senegal.

19th. Farther decrees upon Juries.

20th,

JANUARY 1791.

20th. Disculpation of the conduct of the royal Liege and Lauzan regiments, which were censured in the troubles at Belfort.

22d. Respecting the Marine penal code.

23d. Farther decrees upon Juries.

24th. News arrived of fresh troubles in the Island of St. Domingo.---Massacre at *La Chapelle* by the *Chasseurs des Barriers*.

25th. Debate on certain taxes.

26th. A law passes for the execution of the decree passed relative to the taking of the oath by the Clergy.

27th. Institution of a Tribunal of Commerce at Paris.

28th. Letter from Leopold to the King relative the Princes who had possessed feudal rights in Alsace.

29th. M. DE MIRABEAU, President.---The bust of M. de Desseilles is presented to the National Assembly.

30th. M. de Montmorin sends to the National Assembly a list of the French Ambassadors in foreign Courts who had taken the civic oath.

31st. Decree relative to the payment of artists, and their proper rewards.

FEBRUARY

FEBRUARY 1791.

- 1st. The King is requested to send three Commissaries to the Island of St. Domingo, for the re-establishment of tranquillity there.
- 2d. Decree relative to the liquidation of offices.
- 3d. M. Tronville proposes to the National Assembly a machine that will raise water five hundred feet.
- 4th. The subject of Juries is discussed.
- 5th. Beneficed Preachers are necessarily obliged to take the civic oath.
- 6th. Decree that the *Caisse d'Extraordinaire* shall supply eighty millions for the expences of the different departments.
- 7th. Conclusion of the decrees respecting Juries.
- 8th. Decree that Curates who have been refractory, shall receive a pension of five hundred livres from the date of their taking the civic oath.
- 9th. The King is requested to commission a ship to go on the discovery of M. de la Peyrouse.
- 10th. A deputation from the Quakers comes to the National Assembly.
- 11th. Report on the troubles at Alsace.---Decree relative to the Judges of the Tribunal of Repeals.
- 12th. Decree making the culture of tobacco free.

FEBRUARY 1791.

- 13th. Decree on the national *Gendarmerie*,
- 14th. M. DUPORT, President.
- 15th. Report on the Hotel of Invalids.
- 16th. Decree on the suppression of Wardens.
- 17th. The community of Paris requests a law to suppress public gaming-houses.
- 18th. Report from the Committee of Finance upon the expences of 1791.
- 19th. Decree on the suppression of entries.
- 20th. The King informs the National Assembly of the departure of his Aunts.
- 21st. Plan of a law respecting emigrations.
- 22d. Decree suppressing feudal distinctions.
- 23d. Report of the troubles at Nimes.
- 24th. The municipality of Arnay le Duc sends the verbal process of the arrest of the King's Aunts in the said town.
- 25th. A project for a decree respecting the residence of the reigning dynasty is discussed.
- 26th. Decree respecting Justices of Peace.
- 27th. Decree relative to Tribunals.
- 28th. A number of people from Paris repair to Vincennes, and demolish the parapets of the platform.---Four hundred *Aristocrats* repair to the *Chateau des Tuilleries* armed with poniards, &c.---The King orders them to put away their arms.

MARCH

MARCH 1791.

- 1st. M. DE NOAILLES, President.—Decree respecting tobacco.
- 2d. Farther clauses respecting the right of patents.
- 3d. Decree that all the Church plate, not necessary to the celebration of Religion, shall be sent to the *Hotel des Monnoies*.
- 4th. Decree respecting the Marshals of France, and the suppression of the Militia.
- 5th. Decree which suppresses the offices of Farmers General.
- 6th. Decree respecting the administrative Bodies.
- 7th. Decree respecting the Cod-fishery on the Banks of Newfoundland.
- 8th. Decree respecting the sale of salt and tobacco in Magazines.
- 9th. Decree that all prisoners confined for high treason shall be sent to the prisons at Orleans.
- 10th. Decree that the Administrators of finance shall be nominated by the King.
- 11th. Decree respecting tythe dispensations.
- 12th. M. DE MONTESQUIOU, President.—Decree abolishing the Norman law.
- 13th. M. de Montmorin acquaints the National Assembly with his negociation with the Princes who had feudal tenures in Alsace.

14th.

MARCH 1791.

14th. M. Gobet is nominated Bishop of Paris.

15th. Decree which revokes the cession made to the house of Condé by the *Clermentois* in 1648.

16th. Decree on the contributions of domains and personal property.

17th. Farther decree relative to beneficed Clergymen.

18th. Decree relative to the entry of goods imported from the French colonies.

19th. Report of an insurrection at Douai.

20th. M. Charles Lameth sends to the National Assembly the sixty thousand livres for which his mother's name was entered in the red-book.

21st. Decree respecting the affair at Douai.

22d. Decree which excludes females from the Regency.

23d. Three thousand invalids come to the National Assembly. The Members desire them to be themselves witnesses of the decrees that of were to pass relative to them.

24th. Decree which grants to the invalid soldiers who wish to retire from the Hospital a pension of 227 livres.

25th. Decree which terminates each succeeding King of France to be in the age of majority at 18 years of age.

MARCH 1791.

26th. Plan for a decree on an uniformity of Weights and Measures.

27th. Decree respecting mines.

28th. Decree respecting the place of Residence of public officers.

29th. Report of another insurrection at Toulouse.

30th. M. TRONCHET, President. M. Mirabeau falls ill.

APRIL 1791.

1st. Debate on the succession AB INTESTAT.

2d. Death of Mirabeau. The National Assembly passes an Arret to go into mourning for eight days.

3d. Decree that the new edifice of Saint Genevieve shall be destined to receive the remains of distinguished men.

4th. Mirabeau is interred amidst the regret and affection of all persons. His body is the first buried in the place consecrated to the memory of great characters.

5th. M. Linguet appears before the bar, with some of the inhabitants of Saint Mark.

6th Debate respecting the Ministry.

7th,

APRIL 1791.

7th. Decree that no Member of the National Assembly shall enter into Administration until four years after he has left the Legislative Body.

8th. Decree prohibiting any of the Members of the National Assembly to derive any favour from the Executive power for four years.

9th. Decree respecting coin.

10th. Decree on the Organization of the Administration.

11th. Decree on the salary of Ministers, and the pensions to be granted when they retire.

12th. Decree on the liquidation of the debts of what were formerly called the Crown Lands.

13th. Decree of the National Assembly upon the motion of Father Gerard, which abolishes the feudal right that established a tax upon fecundity.

14th. Decree respecting the liberty of being an exchange agent on the providing a patent.

15th. Decree respecting beneficed Clergymen.

16th. Decree respecting the pay of a hundred thousand auxiliary troops.

18th. M. CHABROUD, President. The King in setting out for Saint Cloud, is stopped by the people, who request his presence at Paris.

19th. The King comes to the National Assembly,

APRIL 1791.

sembly, where he complains of the people's opposition to his going to Saint Cloud.

20th. Decree respecting Freemen Wardens.

21st. M. de la Fayette resigns his commission. The sixty Battalions assemble, and with loud shouts proclaim his continuing to command them as their General. After a few days he cedes to their entreaties.

22d. M. Houdon presents the National Assembly with the bust of Mirabeau.

23d. The King notifies to foreign powers his irrevocable oath to support the Constitution.

25th. M. REUBEL, President. Dreadful account of the troubles at Saint Domingo.

26th. M. Raubaut proposes to the National Assembly the issuing out Assignats of five livres each.

27th. Debate on the organization of the National Guards.

28th. M. de la Fayette, in the name of the National Guards, compliments the King in an address upon the magnanimous conduct of his Majesty, which declared to the whole world, the sovereignty of the French nation.

29th. Decree which permits the regular troops to be present at the Constitutional Meetings.

MAY

MAY 1791.

- 1st. The barriers of the city are opened, and no farther taxes of *droits d'entrees* are payable through the interior part of the kingdom.
- 2d. Debate on the re-junction of Avignon to France.
- 3d. Farther debates on the same subject.
- 4th. Decree which suspends the re-union of Avignon to France.
- 5th. Debate upon small Assignats.
- 6th. Decree ordering the issuing out of a hundred millions of small Assignats.
- 7th. Decree which permits the Clergy unwilling to take the Civic Oath, to officiate in particular churches, provided they preach nothing against the law.
- 8th. M. D'ANDRE, President. Decree upon the Organization of the department of finances.
- 9th. Farther decrees on the departments of the finance.
- 10th. Decree to suppress all licences to French subjects from the Pope.—Upon the right of petition.
- 11th. Debate on the subject of the Colonies.
- 12th. Farther debate on the same subject.
- 13th. Decree stating that no law respecting Slaves shall be made by the National Assembly, but at the request of the Assemblies of the Colonies.
- 14th. M. de Seine, who is deaf and dumb, presents

MAY 1791.

sents the bust of Mirabeau to the National Assembly.

15th. Decree that People of Colour, born of free parents, may be admitted to parish meetings, and in future to colony assemblies.

16th. Decree that the Members of the National Assembly shall not be eligible at the approaching election of a National Assembly.

17th. Decree which permits the commerce of gold and silver.

18th. Debate on the organization of the Legislative Body.

19th. A decree passes which allows the Members of the Legislative Body to be eligible at the ensuing election, but states at the same time that they shall not be afterwards elected till after an interval of two years.

20th. Debate upon copper coin.

21st. Decree relative to small Assignats.

22d. M. BUREAU DE PUSY, President.

23d. The Municipality of Avignon earnestly presses the National Assembly to make a definitive decree relative to the disturbances of the town of Avignon, then more unfortunate than ever.

24th. The plan of a decree on the re-union of Avignon is rejected.

25th.

MAY 1792.

25th. The King is requested to send Mediators to Avignon.

26th. Decree that the Louvre and the Tuilleries shall be destined for the King's residence, and for a collection of the monuments of Science and of Art.

27th. The proposal for a sub-division of the three hundred millions in contributions of domains, and personal property is adopted.

28th. Decree relative to primary Assemblies.

29th. The King is requested to send the instructions of the National Assembly to the Colonies.

30th. Voltaire is declared worthy to be transferred to the place consecrated to the memory of great men.

JUNE 1791.

1st. Decree that the penalty of death shall be made the loss of life without torture.

2d. The people are riotous towards the refractory Clergy at the *Theatins*.

3d. Farther decrees on the Penal Code.—Respecting persons reprieved.

4th. Farther decrees on the property of delinquents.

5th. Decree respecting the considerations to be allowed

JUNE 1791.

allowed the widows and orphans of the National Guards, who were killed at Nancy, and at the taking of the Bastile.

6th. M. D'AUCHY, President. Farther decrees on the Penal Code. Decree respecting age with regard to punishments.

7th. Farther decree respecting crimes against the internal safety of the kingdom.

8th. Continuation respecting crimes against the Constitution.

6th. Decree that all briefs, rescripts, and bulls coming from the See of Rome, shall be deemed null and void, if they are not approved by the Legislative Body, and sanctioned by the King.

10th. Report respecting the licentiousness of the army.

11th. Decree ordering M. de Condé to appear in France within a fortnight.

13th. Decree containing additional articles respecting the Legislative Body.

14th. Decree relative to departments and districts.

15th. Farther decrees on the Penal Code.—Decree respecting the violation of letters.

16th. Some young Citizens appear at the bar, and swear in the name of the Almighty, that they

JUNE 1791.

they are ready to live and die for defence of their country.

17th. Farther decrees on the Penal Code. On delinquents who might hold offices under the state.

18th. Report of an insurrection at Bastia.

19th. M. ALEXANDER BEAUMARNAIS, President.

20th. Decree on the taxes on the commodities in the East India trade.

21st. The King escapes from Paris with all the Royal Family.—Couriers are immediately dispatched to all parts of the kingdom.—Every body is in arms.—The National Assembly sits continually, and the Ministers are entrusted with the executive power.

22d. The Post-master of St. Menehold, whilst the fugitives are changing horses, conceives, from his recollection of the King, that he must be then present, he immediately acquaints the Municipality, which sends off intelligence to Varennes.—The National Guards immediately assemble.—The Hussars are disarmed, and the carriage of the King is detained.

23d. The National Assembly dispatches Messrs. Latour, Maubourg, Pethion, and Barnave, to Varennes, to accompany the King at his return.

JUNE 1791.

24th. Decree that M. de Bouillé be deprived of his commission in the army.

25th. The King and the Royal Family come back to Paris, escorted by a most numerous guard, whilst the streets are thronged by an immense crowd of people, who silent and in peaceable order view the cavalcade.

26th. Messrs. Leblanc and Thevenin, who stopt the carriage of the King at Varennes, appear before the National Assembly.

27th. The three Commissioners sent to receive from the King and Queen their declaration, give an account to the National Assembly of their reception.

28th. Decree relative to the nominating a Guardian for the heir to the throne.

29th. Farther decrees respecting the Penal Code.

30th. Decree relative to the standards of the regular troops.

JULY 1791.

1st. The arrival of the King's next brother and his consort at Brussels is announced to the National Assembly.

2d. Decree respecting fortresses, &c.

3d.

JULY 1791.

3d. M. CHARLES LAMETH, President. General Luckner sends to the National Assembly his oath taken down in writing, that he is willing to live and die for the Constitution.

4th. Suppression of the Chambers of Accounts.

5th. Decree respecting the Municipal Code.

6th. Poor houses are suppressed, the abuse of which charity was become quite a scandal.

7th. The King being informed that M. d'Artois made use of his name in some engagements, sends to the National Assembly a formal disavowal of his conduct.

8th. Decree on the Correctional Police.

9th. Decree ordering the emigrants to come to France within two months, at the peril of paying three times the common taxes.

10th. The Spanish Ambassador testifies to the Minister the inclinations of his Court to keep in terms of peace with France.

11th. The body of Voltaire is conveyed to the place consecrated to the memory of distinguished characters.

12th. Decree respecting mines.

13th. Report relative to the troops which were commanded by M. de Bouillé.

14th. A young man pays his homage to the National Assembly in presenting an allegorical

JULY 1791.

representation of its labours, painted by his father.

- 15th. Decree that the Sieur Bouillé shall be tried by the National High Court at Orleans.
- 16th. Report of the disturbances in the department of Vendee.
- 17th. An attack made upon two persons in the *Champ de Mars*—Martial law is proclaimed, and the red flag hoisted.
- 18th. Report of the disturbances at the *Champ de Mars*. Decree against the disturbers of the peace.
- 19th. M. FERMON, President. Decree respecting laws that regard agriculture, and the country.
- 20th. Farther decrees on the said laws.
- 21st. Decree ordering the regiment formerly called the regiment of Nassau, as well as other foreign regiments, to adopt the uniform arms of the French troops.
- 22d. M. Duveyrier gives to the National Assembly an account of his conference with the refugee Princes.
- 23d. Report of the troubles in the province of Caux.
- 24th. Decree relative to officers who have quitted their posts.

25th.

JULY 1791.

25th. Decree relative to those persons whose places have been suppressed.

26th. Decree respecting the public strength.

27th. M. d'Espagnac is interrogated by the National Assembly relative to his estate of Sancerre.

28th. Decree respecting the organization of the National Guard.

29th. Decree relative to forged Assignats.

30th. Decree on the orders of Chevaliers.

31st. Report upon the hostile behaviour of the Princes of Germany with respect to France.

AUGUST 1791.

1st. M. d'ANDRE, President. The Commissioners who were sent to the northern frontiers, in order to examine their condition, declare to the National Assembly that they found them in a state of very good defence.

2d. Troubles at Brie-Robert County.

3d. Decree ordering the stamping of base money of bell-metal mixed with copper.

4th. Farther decrees on the military organization.

5th.

AUGUST 1791.

5th. M. Thouret reads the French Constitution to the National Assembly.

6th. The Municipality of Paris takes down the red flag and sets up the white one, as a signal of the restoration of public tranquillity.

7th. Farther decrees on the laws that regard agriculture, and the country.

8th. Debate on the review of the Constitution.

9th. Debate on the division of the Kingdom.

10th. On public powers.

11th. On the judiciary order.

12th. On electoral assemblies.

13th. On the Regency, and the Royal Family.

14th. On the Royal Sanction.

14th. M. DUPONT, President. Debate on the promulgation of the laws.

16th. A tax is laid upon letters and packets.

17th. Report of the transactions at St. Domingo, occasioned by the decree respecting People of Colour.

18th. Report relative to the frontiers on the Higher and Lower Rhine being in a proper state of defence.

19th. Debate on offices that regard feudal tenures.

20th. Report that the friends of the Constitution at Caen have pulled down the statue of Louis the Fourteenth in that town.

AUGUST 1791.

21st. M. de Blanchelande informs the National Assembly that the decree respecting Men of Colour has been the occasion of consequences that have brought horror and despair in St. Domingo.

22d. Decree respecting individual liberty.

23d. Decree respecting the faults of the Press.

24th. A Constitutional decree passes respecting the securing the King.

25th. A Constitutional decree passes, that none belonging to the Royal Family shall be eligible to those places which are only in the gift of the people.

26th. A decree that all the brass and copper which have been found in those parish churches that have been shut up, shall be carried to the *Hotels des Monnoies*.

27th. Decree that J. J. Rousseau merited the honours due to the memory of distinguished men.

28th. Decree respecting the maintaining discipline in the army.—The ladies of the hall make an offer to their country of the silver ornaments and other decorations made use of to celebrate the feast of St. Louis.

29th. Decree that all the Seals fixed on the houses and money chests, designed for the Civil List, shall be taken off.

30th.

AUGUST 1791.

30th. Debate and decree upon National Conventions.

31st. Decree relative to the reimbursing of the Solicitors at the Grand Council.

SEPTEMBER 1791.

1st. Decree on the manner in which the Constitutional Act shall be presented to the King.

2d. Decree that public rejoicing days shall be pointed out, to keep up the commemoration of the French Revolution.

3d. The Constitution completed. A deputation of sixty members is sent to present it to the King.

4th. Report on the manner in which the King received the Constitutional Act.

5th. Decree that the treasury of what was called the Abbey St. Dennis shall be joined to the national cabinet.

6th. Decree respecting the utility of posts on all the great roads of the kingdom.

7th. Report on the accountability of the Receivers of the Finances.

8th. Debate on the above.

9th,

SEPTEMBER 1791.

9th. Report on the state of the Finances before, and during, as well as after the Revolution.

10th. The King's Commissioners sent to Avignon, give an account of their success before the bar of the National Assembly.

11th. The alternatives of administrations of departments and districts are suppressed.

12th. M. THOURET, President. Report respecting Avignon.

13th. The King writes to the National Assembly that he accepts of the Constitution. Every event respecting the Revolution, and the departure of the King, is to be forgotten.

14th. Decree that Avignon and the Comtat Venaissin shall form integral parts of the French Empire.—The King comes to the National Assembly to sign the Constitution, and swears to support and defend it with every power with which he is entrusted.

15th. Decree that the solemn declaration of the King shall be proclaimed throughout the Empire, and that all prisoners confined for debt shall be set at large.

16th. Decree that Juries shall begin on the first of next January.

17th. Decree on the encouragement to be granted to Artists.

18th.

SEPTEMBER 1791.

18th. Decree on the new organization of Notaries.—Universal rejoicings and illuminations.

19th. Decree that the Constituent National Assembly shall be dissolved the thirtieth of this month.

20th. The Provisional Tribunal of Orleans suppressed.

21st. Decree that the remains of J. J. Rousseau shall remain at M. Girardin.

22d. *Te Deum* is sung at the church of *Notre Dame*, in acknowledgement for the King's acceptance of the Constitution.

23d. Decree that any person who shall sign protestations against the Constitution shall not be eligible to any public department.

24th. Constitutional decree respecting the Colonies.

25th. Decree that the new Legislature shall commence its Sessions the first of October.

26th. Decree relative to teachers of public Schools.

27th. Suppression of the Chambers of Commerce.

28th. Decree that Men of Colour or of any religion, by conforming to the Laws, shall be admitted to all the privileges of the French Constitution.

29th. The King is requested to grant to the National

SEPTEMBER 1791.

tional Assembly a picture, in which he might be represented as offering the Constitutional Act to the Prince his son.—Decree respecting Patriotic Societies.

30th. The last day of the sitting of the Constituent National Assembly. The King comes to the Assembly, and addresses the Members.—The President proclaims these words—
“ THE CONSTITUENT NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DECLARES THAT ITS POWER IS AT
“ AN END, AND THAT IT WILL SIT NO
“ LONGER.”

F I N I S.

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